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Marchers at Auschwitz: 'We came here to cry'

News agencies

OSWIECIM, Poland - Led by Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, over 7,000 Jews from around the world retraced the three-kilometer journey from Auschwitz to the gas chambers at Birkenau.

Flanked by his Polish counterpart Jerzy Buzek, he walked under the notorious metal gate of Auschwitz at the head of this year's March of the Living, comprising some 6,500 young people and 1,000 Holocaust survivors.

"We are here together, young and old. We came here to cry, Labor MK Shevah Weiss said before the march.

Netanyahu, the first prime minister to participate in the march, told the gathering that Israel's creation has ensured the survival of Jews.

"This is the lesson of the Holocaust, this and only this: That the existence of the Jewish people is tied to Jewish sovereignty and a Jewish army that rests on the strength of Jewish faith," Netanyahu said.

"Here, right here, they tore the babies from their mothers' arms and threw them into the ovens," he said at Birkenau. "You can almost hear the mothers' cries rising from the ground and you can feel the paralyzing fear of the children."

Netanyahu began his speech by wrapping himself in a tall and reciting the Shema.

"Despite everything and after everything, in the war between the Nazi evil and the Jewish people - we won," said Netanyahu, flanked by an IDF honor guard.

The marchers were quiet, still under the pall cast by visiting the camp's museum with its huge piles of braided human hair, worn shoes and broken glasses taken from the victims.

For some older people the return to scenes of terrible loss was hard to bear - but undertaken out of a need to bear witness.

"I come here with very dark thoughts, but I must be here," said Nahman Baharier, 75, from Tel Aviv, who was strong enough to survive forced labor in a mine near Auschwitz, while weaker prisoners were sent to the gas chambers.



Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu carries an Israeli flag as he leads the March of the Living yesterday from Auschwitz to Birkenau.

Franciszka Pillersdorf recalled being brought to Auschwitz when the Nazis selected which prisoners might live and which would be killed. Her mother stayed by her two little sisters and died with them.

"All the time I remember... my mother said she would not leave my younger sisters. I was the oldest so I survived," said Pillersdorf, 73, who now lives in Toronto.

Buzek, in his address, recalled the tens of thousands of non-Jewish Poles who died at

Auschwitz, and the great risk many Poles took to save their Jewish companions.

"Few people know that it was not only difficult, but also very dangerous to help Jews in Poland," Buzek said. "There was an immediate death penalty for saving even one Jew. The Nazis applied collective responsibility in such cases, and they would kill the whole family, often the neighbors."

Chief Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau - a Holocaust survivor who was liberated from Buchenwald at age 7 - looked visibly uncomfortable, stiffened and glared during Buzek's remarks.

But many in the crowd appeared to appreciate Buzek's point.

"I don't know if this was the right place to say that, but it's true," said Polish-born Miriam Hasson, who was 10 years old when the Nazis liquidated the Warsaw Ghetto. She survived in the care of a Christian Polish family outside of Warsaw, and now lives in Tel Aviv.

Another source of controversy played itself at the edge of Auschwitz, where a small group gathered to demand a huge wooden cross be allowed to remain.

A handful of supporters of the cross gathered near it before the march and displayed signs in English, including one that read: "Leave Christ at Auschwitz."

Jewish organizations say the eight-meter-high cross, visible from within the former death camp, disturbs the memory of the mostly Jewish dead.

Senior US official:

Next 10 days crucial for peace process

By HILLEL KUTTLER and MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

The US believes that diplomatic moves over the next 10 days will determine whether the peace process will emerge from its year-long freeze, a senior administration official said in Washington yesterday.

US special envoy Dennis Ross and Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs Martin Indyk are to arrive in the Middle East this weekend to prepare for the May 4 London meetings with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. She is to meet separately with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat.

In what might be a new development, West Bank settlement leaders said yesterday they were told by senior officers in the Central Command that maps were being drawn for an 11 percent redeployment.

Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza spokeswoman Yehudit Tayar said council members were given details of the plans. She would not identify the officers who divulged them.

She said that council members drafted letters last night to cabinet ministers to protest that the plans would isolate about 20 settlements, which would be surrounded by Palestinian territory and have only a single access road.

The Central Command spokesman had no comment. Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai's spokesman said he had no information about such plans, and that any such decisions are made by the cabinet.

The council heads' letters appealed to ministers' "sense of responsibility" after learning that the issue would be raised in Sunday's cabinet meeting, Tayar said.

She warned that if indeed the details are true, the settlers would seek to topple the government.

"Even when a 9% withdrawal was being discussed, we were warned by defense officials that national security would be forfeit," she said.

Settlers plan to hold a demonstration on Sunday outside the Prime Minister's Office to urge the government to stand firm and not give in to pressures, for which Tayar said the settlers would pay a high price.

"We hope that Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu fulfills his responsibilities and remains in power, but we will withdraw our support if he goes ahead with an 11% withdrawal," she said.

Council member Elyakim Haetzni warned that an 11% withdrawal would bring destruction on the entire settlement enterprise in the West Bank and Gaza. He noted that Arafat has already announced intentions to declare Palestinian statehood in May 1999.

"He expects us to provide him with an airport, seaport, safe passage, and territorial continuity. Without these things he can't declare a state," Haetzni said.

While the US has often called on the parties to make the "hard decisions" necessary to spur the talks, this time Washington believes that the two sides understand the gravity of the situation and the US's desire to resolve the stalemate, the senior administration official said.

"This really is the process now of bringing this to an agreement," he said.

The official said that the Ross and Albright trips were being viewed as "the end game."

"We've been at this a long time. We do believe this process needs to reach a resolution."

"We want to see closure. As long as we see the sides engaged, we'll be there," the official said. "This is a time of decisions. We are concerned about the process spinning out. The string for diplomatic decisions has run out."

"This isn't being arbitrary or forcing or compelling, but recognizing we have taken this as far as it can go. This is not a surprise. The parties know our thinking. It's the time to bring it to closure," the official said.

"We've made our views clear at the highest levels. We're not interested in a rhetorical statement. We want an agreement."

See CRUCIAL, Page 14

Rabbinate includes Lebanon in IDF prayer

By HAIM SHAPIRO

With large numbers of IDF soldiers serving in Lebanon, the Chief Rabbinate Council this week decided to change the prayer on behalf of the nation's defenders, recited on Shabbat in many synagogues.

Until now the prayer had called for the well-being of soldiers "from the border of Lebanon to the riverbed of Egypt." The prayer now reads "in every place," to include soldiers serving in the security zone.

A similar change is to be made in the memorial prayer for fallen soldiers, traditionally recited on the three pilgrimage festivals.

The council also decided to include the police in the prayer by adding the words "and the security forces" to the prayer.

The change was made at the suggestion of Sephardi Chief Rabbi Eliahu Bakshi-Doron, who presided over the council for the

first time. Until now Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau had served as president of the council and Bakshi-Doron had headed the rabbinical courts. From the beginning of Nissan, they exchanged these roles.

Bakshi-Doron explained to the council that he had had many appeals from the public to make these changes.

The council also decided that the special prayers for Independence Day, including the Hallel prayer, should be recited on Thursday, Independence Day, but not on Friday, which has been declared a vacation day by the government.

Liturgically, Friday is to be treated as an ordinary day, the council ruled.

Currency-reform announcement to leave out taxation details

By DAVID HARRIS and Jerusalem Post Staff

The much-heralded announcement expected next week on the liberalization of currency-exchange regulations will exclude some key components due to ongoing disagreements between the Finance Ministry and the Bank of Israel, sources in both bodies told *The Jerusalem Post* yesterday.

At the same time, Income Tax Commissioner Doron Levy said a general announcement is in the works concerning a shift from the existing territorially-based taxation system to a personal one.

A personal taxation system would mean that all taxpayers,

including salaried workers, would have to file annual tax returns.

Coming at the same time as the currency reform, such a change would raise the dilemma of which overseas assets to tax, to what extent and by what mechanism.

Sources close to the currency reform process suggested many of the unannounced details would, in fact, pertain to various taxation aspects.

Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman told the *Post* last night

that immigrants do not stand to be affected by the prospective tax reform.

"There are no such implications, since all overseas-paid taxes will be credited by the Israeli government," he said, speaking by phone from Warsaw.

Neeman stressed he has no intention of announcing any tax proposals over the course of the next two weeks.

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SHABBAT	BEGINS	ENDS
Jerusalem	6:36 p.m.	7:52 p.m.
Tel Aviv	6:54 p.m.	7:54 p.m.
Haifa	6:48 p.m.	7:54 p.m.
Beersheba	6:52 p.m.	7:51 p.m.
Eilat	6:50 p.m.	7:50 p.m.



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Israeli intelligence experts say:

Iran nuclear papers genuine

By STEVE RODAN

Israeli government experts have deemed as genuine Iranian government documents obtained from the US that report Teheran's receipt of nuclear devices from Kazakhstan in 1992.

A senior government official said yesterday that the documents have been inspected by several intelligence sources and the assessment is that the Iranian correspondence is not a forgery.

"The feeling is that we are dealing with authentic material," the official, who refused to be identified, said. Israeli experts

have been studying the documents for several weeks since they were relayed by Labor MK Rafi Elul. For his part, however, Elul said Israel had received another copy of the same documents in 1995 but had not published them.

A congressional source said documents that report Iran receiving at least two nuclear devices from Kazakhstan have been held by the House National Security Committee.

The source said a debate raged within the US intelligence community whether the documents were forged by the Iranian opposition movement.

Last week, two US House members, Bill McCollum (R, Florida) and James Saxton (R, New Jersey) told *The Jerusalem Post* that the evidence they've seen led them to conclude that Iran has nuclear weapons parts and supplies from the former Soviet Union republics in Central Asia.

A US analyst with extensive connections in the US intelligence community said government nuclear experts, including those in the CIA and Energy Department, are convinced that Iran has some sort of a non-operational nuclear device. But until now they can't prove it.

Rep. Curt Weldon, (R, Pennsylvania),

who chairs the Research and Development subcommittee of the House National Security Committee, said he plans to "make a major case on the Hill" regarding a report in *The Post* earlier this month that Iran obtained nuclear weapons in 1992.

Weldon was quoted by *Aerospace Daily*, published in Washington, as saying, "This is a very dangerous situation if what the Israeli press is saying is true, and it will be a major problem for us because it means not only that Iran within 12 months from now [will have] medium range missiles, but it will also have a warhead to put onto that missile."

Ministry protests EU plan to boycott West Bank produce

By JAY BUSHNICKY and MARGOT DUCKEITCH

The European Community's reported intention to impose an economic crackdown against goods and agricultural produce which originate in settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip drew a strong protest yesterday from Foreign Ministry Spokesman Aviv Shir-On. "Any attempt to link Israel's economic relations with Europe to the Middle East peace process can cause real damage," Shir-On said. The ministry's negative reaction was prompted by a report published in *Yediot Aharanot* according to which "secret dispatches received lately from the Israeli mission to the EU in Brussels indicate that the Europeans are about to impose sections on products that appear on their black list."

Shir-On contended that such a move could generate "negative and unrealistic expectations," presumably in the Palestinian Authority.

Describing the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations as "delicate and complicated," he said they require "large amounts of good will" and must be free of pressure.

"We are convinced that Europe and its leaders will know how to avoid being lured by ideas which only can cause damage to our relationship and to the peace process," Shir-On said.

Yediot Aharanot said agreements between Israel and the EU grant full or partial exemption from customs duties to Israeli exports. It cites the economic annex to the Paris Protocol which was appended to the Oslo Accords to the effect that customs exemptions will be granted to all products from Israel and the PA, including those that stem from the Israeli settlements.

While there was no confirmation whether the EU had already taken a decision to impose the taxes or was still considering the proposal, Yehudit Tayar of the Council of

Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza said if the reports were true the settlers hope the Israeli government would deal with the issue.

"If a decision has already been made by the EU it is a serious violation of the Oslo Agreement," she said. "For so many years Israel has fought against other countries boycotting her goods and here we have fellow Jews attempting to damage our own country's products," Tayar added.

The products include agricultural goods, wines, flowers and processed food produced in settlements throughout Judea and Samaria.

According to the Paris Protocol, an economic appendix to the Oslo Agreements that relates to imported merchandise made in Israel, the autonomous areas and settlements, goods made in those areas are entitled to partial or full tax exemption.

Victor Harel, deputy Director-General of the Foreign Ministry for Economic Affairs reportedly said "if the Europeans change this arrangement, Israel will see this as a grave violation of the Oslo accords."

Another Foreign Ministry official warned that the diplomatic harm that will be caused to the Oslo process if such taxes are imposed on Yehuda products would be greater than the economic damage.

Aharon Domb, director-general of the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza said "the European Community is apparently not familiar with the Yehuda residents. When they press us and close us in, we find even more ways to develop and broaden ourselves."

Gush Shalom spokesman Adam Keller praised the plan in a statement, which declared that "settlements products are manufactured in occupied areas under army control and according to international law they are not part of

No special pardons planned next week

By BAT-SHEVA TSUR

Despite public expectations of increased presidential pardons by Independence Day - and although he intends to double the normal amount of pardons he awards during the jubilee year - President Ezer Weizman does not plan to grant any special pardons before next week, Beit Hanassi announced yesterday.

There will just be the regular commutations of sentences that take place before every holiday, such as letting prisoners go home a few days earlier, before Independence Day, instead of waiting until their time is up after the holiday, spokeswoman Batya Keinan said.

No additional pardons can be forthcoming for the time being, because no budgets have yet been allocated for the extra staff who will help wade through the piles of requests for pardons that have reached Beit Hanassi and the Justice Ministry in anticipation of clemency. The process will continue through the jubilee year.

"It will take time. There are no proper working teams yet and no rooms have been allocated them,"

Keinan said. Beit Hanassi Director-General Arye Shamer is expected to meet next week with Justice Ministry officials on the issue.

The president has gone on record as saying that he expects about double the number of pardons to be granted during the jubilee. In a normal year, Weizman commutes some 400 sentences, but only a few dozen pardons are granted for serious crimes. Weizman said he plans to adhere to this formula during the jubilee, although he will be more lenient than in previous years.

Former attorney-general Yona Blatman, who headed the committee which laid down recommended guidelines for presidential pardons during the coming year, said he believes about 800 people will benefit from early releases.

Special attention will be paid to prisoners who have tried to rehabilitate themselves in jail, to those who have come clean from drugs, to those who are suffering from ill-health, and to first-time offenders who are serving sentences of less than two years, Blatman said.



20% more crashes January-March

Paramedics treat a pedestrian struck by a taxi yesterday on Jerusalem's King George Boulevard. Thirty-five people lost their lives in 2,406 road accidents last month, according to figures published yesterday by the Central Bureau of Statistics. Some 4,450 were injured in the same period. Police said this is part of a 20% increase in road accidents between January and March over the same period last year. During the first quarter there were 126 deaths and 863 serious injuries, compared to 136 and 814 respectively during the first quarter of 1997.

(Text: David Harris; photo: Ben Hershler)

PA lets Israel grill Driben murder suspect

By MARGOT DUCKEITCH

The Israel Police was granted permission by its Palestinian coun-

terpart yesterday to question the Palestinian wounded during the incident in Maon on Sunday that left settler Dov Driben dead and his comrades Yehoshafat Tor and Ephraim Pearl wounded.

Accompanied by Hebron Palestinian Police chief Gen. Tarik Ziad, the Israeli investigators, headed by Ch.-Supt. Ya'acov Ben-Moshe, questioned 30-year-old gunshot victim Musa Dababsha at his bedside in the city's Aliya Hospital for some two hours.

Judea and Samaria police spokesman Opher Sivan said Dababsha did not admit to murdering Driben. Sivan said 17 Palestinians are still in custody and the investigation is continuing.

"Our version is the true one," Ziad told reporters, "and therefore we permitted Israeli police to question Dababsha. No matter what the results will be, the guilty people are those that give the settlers weapons to use against Palestinians."

Yesterday Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, accompanied by OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan and Judea and Samaria police chief Cmdr. Yitzhak Aharonovitch, paid a condolence visit to the Driben family in Maon. Before the visit Mordechai went to the site of Driben's murder and received a briefing on the incident and the investigation.

Today Likud faction members, headed by MK Uzi Landau, are to visit the Driben family and continue to Hebron where they will tour the Machpela Cave and the Avraham Avinu quarter.

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Ms. Eve Heldi Smalheiser and Mr. Edward Z. Bine-Stock of the United States, United Kingdom, France and Israel announce their engagement to be married. The wedding will take place on June 30, 1998 at the King David Hotel, Jerusalem.

Knesset remembers the names

By LIAT COLLINS

Against the backdrop of the Chagall tapestry depicting the history of the Jewish people, while the flags outside flew at half mast, the Knesset yesterday held its annual "Every Person has a Name" ceremony marking Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day.

President Ezer Weizman, Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon, Sephardi Chief Rabbi Eliahu Bakshi-Doron, and other dignitaries attended.

At the beginning of the ceremony, a special six-branched candelabrum, signifying the six million who perished, was lit. Among those lighting a candle was journalist Yosef (Tommy) Lapid, a survivor who celebrated his bar mitzva in a cellar in the Budapest ghetto.

The Knesset ceremony, like others around the country, was dedicated to the theme of the contribution of Holocaust survivors in building the state.

Zelda's poem "Every Person has a Name," was read by Liron

Perez, from the Beit Shמש school attended by the seven schoolgirls gunned down last year at Nahariya.

Tichon talked of those who "in the days of the horrors of the camps and ghettos, in the knowledge the world had abandoned them to their fate, learned the hard way that they could never again be a minority in a strange country. They bravely fought for their right to go to the Land of Israel, whose gates were closed to them. In shaky boats and crafts, they headed for a safe haven, were imprisoned in camps, and continued to come even when the country was in the grips of war."

Tichon mentioned former Knesset Speaker Dov Shilansky, a survivor who arrived on the *Altalena*, immediately started fighting for the state, and later lost his own son in battle. The annual Knesset ceremony was Shilansky's initiative.

Bakshi-Doron noted that if a person dies and leaves no relatives to say Kaddish, the whole Jewish people becomes their relation.

One by one, people stepped up

to the podium to read the names of those who perished. The president's wife, Reuma Weizman, read the names of Jews from Algeria; Tichon's wife, Ludmilla, recalled Belgian Jews and her own relatives from Poland.

One by one, the terrible stories surfaced: of those killed by their own neighbors when they sought refuge, including the father of former prime minister Yitzhak Shamir, of those killed in forests and woods; of those buried alive; of those killed in camps; and those who died from disease just before liberation. And perhaps worst of all: of those whose place and date of death is not known — so completely did they vanish.

Special mention was also made of Jews in Arab countries who were killed during the war. Nissim Kazaz, a leader of the Iraqi immigrant community, spoke of the Nazi-inspired pogrom in Baghdad in which his father was one of the 120 killed.

A children's choir sang "Eli, Eli," by Hanna Szenes. And then their voices rang out the national anthem "Hatikva." The Hope.

Holocaust Remembrance Day marked with sirens, ceremonies

By ELI WOHLGELER and news agencies

At the site of the Auschwitz death camp, in Berlin, and throughout Israel yesterday, Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day was marked by wreath-laying ceremonies, the recitation of Kaddish and moments of silence.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu walked under the notorious metal gate of the Auschwitz death camp at the head of the March of the Living — about 6,500 young people and 1,000 Holocaust survivors — to mark the day.

At 10 o'clock here yesterday morning, the two-minute siren sounded, bringing the country to a halt and marking the beginning of the day's events.

At Kikar Shabbat in Jerusalem's Mea She'arim neighborhood, a group of haridim forcefully prevented a cameraman from filming the intersection, some yelling "Nazi" at him and his sound man. One haridim man grabbed the camera and broke off the front lens.

At checkpoints in the territories, soldiers set up barriers just before the siren to block the flow of traffic, and then stood at attention for two minutes, while Palestinian drivers waited patiently.

In eastern Jerusalem, Palestinians went about their business as normal, pausing only to watch Israeli policemen who stood with their heads bowed while the sirens wailed.

In Yad Vashem's Hall of Remembrance, visitors took turns reading names of victims. Many then placed white carnations on the black stone floor covered with



Drivers stand at attention on Jerusalem's Rehov Nordau yesterday during the sounding of sirens marking Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day.

(Brian Hendler)

the inscriptions of the names of the Nazi camps. By the end of the ceremony, most carnations piled up on the name Auschwitz.

Flags throughout the country were at half-mast for the day, and places of entertainment were closed.

In Berlin, the day was marked by reading aloud the names of its 55,000 Jewish victims of the Nazis. The annual event was held for the first time in east Berlin, on the grounds of a retirement home for Jews that was commandeered by the Gestapo in 1942 and converted into a holding depot for Jews destined for the death camps.

Jews lived in Berlin, representing a third of all German Jews at the time. The city today has less than 10,000 Jews.

The Berlin reading began at dusk on Wednesday with the name of Junia Aal, a woman born in Bavaria in 1860 and killed at the Theresienstadt death camp on September 1, 1942.

Organizers estimated they would finish late yesterday evening with the name of Leo Zyzanski, who was murdered at Auschwitz on July 24, 1942, at the age of 16.

In the 1920s, more than 170,000

men, children and the elderly, were citizens of this city but their names are not on any gravestone, are not mentioned in any prayer for the dead," she said.

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'Jubilee Bells' will mention Rabin's life and death

By HELEN KAYE

The Dor Shalom movement knew that Yitzhak Rabin's assassination was, in fact, included in the *Jubilee Bells* performance, but called for a boycott of the event anyway, a reliable source at the

Jubilee Association said yesterday. Moments from Rabin's life are shown in the planned film segment, and the Oslo Accords are mentioned.

There is also a segment showing the tears, the candles and the vigils in Rabin Square following

Rabin's assassination in 1995.

Dor Shalom contends that this segment was added as a result of the pressure exerted over the past few days.

"Yitzhak Rabin's life and his tragic death are mentioned during the course of *Jubilee Bells* with all

due honor to the man and his work," said jubilee committee director Doron Shmueli.

He added he was appalled that politicians and a political movement would make such despicable use of the most traumatic event that Israeli society has experienced.



Stamp honors Righteous Gentile diplomats

A first-day cover honoring five Gentile diplomats who saved Jews during the Holocaust by violating orders and giving them visas was issued yesterday by the Postal Authority's Philatelic Service. The stamp, designed by A. Vanooljen, features the portraits of Aristides de Sousa Mendes (Portugal); Sempo Sugihara (Japan); Selahattin Ulkumen (Turkey); Giorgio Perlasca (Spain); and Charles Lutz (Switzerland). On the background of the stamp is a photo of a crowd outside the Japanese Consulate in Kaunas, Lithuania, waiting to apply for Japanese transit visas, as well as a photo of a protective pass seal.

(Tara J. Siegel)

Poll: Most Americans want to learn about Holocaust

WASHINGTON (AP) — One of five Americans does not know or is not sure Jews were killed in the Holocaust — or that it happened in World War II — according to a survey commissioned by the Holocaust Memorial Museum.

But the museum took heart Wednesday in findings that showed a large majority of Americans want to learn more about Nazi Germany's murderous campaign in hopes of preventing future genocide.

Eighty percent picked the Holocaust as one of history's most important lessons — behind the American Revolution and ahead of American Indians' struggles, the civil rights movement, the Vietnam War, slavery and the Cold War. And 66% wanted to know more about the Holocaust.

In one provocative question, Americans were asked, "Should we put the Holocaust behind us or continue to discuss it?" Eighty-three percent said keep discussing it, 10% said put it behind us and the rest were undecided.

Most Americans recognized that "the Holocaust isn't just a tale about what the Nazis did to Jews, but it's about what some human beings did to other human beings. There's a lesson for everyone in that," Bloomfield said.

She dismissed survey findings that indicated many Americans don't know Holocaust history very well, saying, "You're surprised by that in a country that doesn't know where Mexico is?" Surveys have suggested many Americans aren't good at geography, including a Gallup poll a decade ago that found nearly half the people surveyed couldn't locate Mexico on a map.

According to the Holocaust poll: — 21% didn't know or weren't sure whether Jews were murdered in gas chambers.

— Nineteen percent answered "false" when asked whether the Holocaust took place during World War II; another 19% weren't sure.

— While 66% of those asked said they wanted to learn more about the Holocaust, minorities were the most enthusiastic — 79% of blacks said they wanted more information and 75% of Latinos.

On the occasion of the dedication of the
**LEONOR & ALVIN CRAMER SEGAL
BEIT MIDRASH**

Rabbi Prof. David Hartman
will speak on
**Critical Reflections on the
Future of Judaism in the State of Israel**

Sunday, May 3, 1998/7 Iyar 5758
at 8:00 p.m.

The public is invited to attend.
The Shalom Hartman Institute
12 Gedalyahu Alon St. Jerusalem Tel. (02) 567-5320

Yeshivat Hakotel
The Wohl Torah Center
congratulates

Mr. Maurice and Mrs. Vivienne Wohl

among the first to rebuild
the Old City of Jerusalem

upon being named

Ne'eman Yerushalayim

by Mayor Olmert and
the City Council of Jerusalem

TREAT YOURSELF TO INDEPENDENCE
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Ministry of Defense
Israel Defense Forces

Independence Day Events Committee
Information Center

State of Israel 33 Independence Day

The security Establishment invites the Public
to attend IDF displays and visit IDF Bases and Depots
and Ministry of Defense Museums

OPEN BASES

NORTHERN COMMAND

1. Shimshon Base (Golani Junction)
2. Kurdi Base (near Tzur Shalom Junction)
3. Weaponry Exhibition at Golani Junction

SOUTHERN COMMAND

1. Natan Base near Beersheva
2. Givati Museum (near Castina Junction)

AIR FORCE

1. Air Force Technical School
2. Tel Nof Base
3. Ramat David Base
4. Hatzorim Base Museum. Open 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Flying displays. Entrance NIS15 adult, NIS10 child. Armed service members free.
5. Nevatim Base

NAVY

1. Haifa Base
2. Ashdod Base
3. Eilat Base. Will be open on the eve of Independence Day, April 29, 8 p.m. - midnight. In cooperation with the Merhavit Association

Bases will be open
Thursday, April 30, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

IDF DEPOTS

The following depots will be open on Independence Day, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

NORTHERN COMMAND

1. Jotfa
2. Afula
3. Nafarot
4. Upper Nazareth
5. Nafarot
6. Nafarot Shimon Metulla
7. Exhibition divided between the two depots
8. Hamaresh - open from April 21
9. Shalom
10. Afula
11. Ma'alot
12. Ma'alot
13. Ma'alot
14. Daliat al Carmel - in Yad Labanim

CENTRAL COMMAND

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IDF DISPLAYS

On Israel's 50th Independence Day, the IDF and the 50th Anniversary Celebrations Association will present displays along the coast and in the cities.

BRUSALBA - Amphibious displays over the President's residence at 11:20 a.m. Between 12:15 and 12:30 p.m. planes will fly over Independence Park. The display will include a "20 minutes" formation flying and mid-air refueling. Various helicopters will be among the airplanes seen.

CENTRAL DISPLAY - In cooperation with Tel Aviv - Haifa Municipality, the central display will take place at the Tel Aviv beach, between 1:00 and 2:00 p.m. The display will include a three-part performance: formation flying, mid-air refueling, and a parade into the sea. An aerial rescue demonstration and a parachute display in various planes and helicopters.

NAVAL DISPLAYS

The display can also be seen at the following times:

- 1. 12:15 p.m. - 12:30 p.m. (Tel Aviv)
- 2. 12:30 p.m. - 12:45 p.m. (Tel Aviv)
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History on display
"Jerusalem Post" President and Publisher Norman Spector (left) and David Lewis, president of Isrotel Hotel Management Ltd., look at one of the paper's historic front pages, on display at a jubilee year exhibition this week at Eilat's Royal Beach Hotel.

No casualties in Athens blast

2 firebombs explode outside Jewish offices

ATHENS — Two firebombs exploded yesterday outside the offices of a Jewish organization, touching off flames that caused damage but no injuries, police said.

The makeshift devices, made of gas canisters, exploded inside the building's empty elevator within seconds of each other at midday.

The first blast occurred as the elevator was between the fourth and fifth floors. The other canister exploded on the sixth floor. The Central Board of Jewish Communities, the headquarters for local Jewish councils around Greece, has offices on each of the three floors.

An anonymous caller warned police of an imminent "dynamic action" on Sourmeli Street, where the attack took place, but the bombs exploded minutes before police cars reached the scene.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, and it was not clear whether the Jewish group was the intended target. The building also houses offices that issue temporary work permits to illegal immigrants.

A group calling itself *Conscientious Arsonists* launched a similar firebomb attack against a right-wing newspaper earlier this week. The group claimed that attack was a protest against racism sometimes experienced by illegal immigrants.

The Greek government strongly condemned yesterday's attack.

"Such actions are have nothing to do with our people's feelings and they damage our country," government spokesman Dimitris Reppas said in a statement.

Police said the damage was not heavy but the explosions caused considerable panic among people inside the offices at the time.

Firebomb devices also have been used in a spate of recent attacks around the capital aimed mostly at foreign targets.

Earlier this month, Greece's deadliest terrorist group, November 17, claimed responsibility for a series of attacks against American targets, including an anti-tank rocket blast at a Citibank branch.

A member of the Jewish group, Hachan Isaac, said the organization had received no bomb threats this year, although they had many in 1997.

Isaac said there has been no security in the building for the past four years. Athens' only synagogue has round-the-clock protection.

In 1983, a bomb aimed at the Jewish organization exploded outside their offices. Three years later, a bomb targeting the immigrant offices exploded in the building's entrance. (Agencies)

MDA sanctions may cause ambulance delays

By JUDY SIEGEL

The Tel Aviv District Labor Court was due late last night to discuss Magen David Adom management's request for restraining orders against MDA workers, who applied sanctions yesterday.

MDA ambulances in the Dan region assembled in Tel Aviv rather than standing on duty at their local stations in Bnei Brak, Givatayim, and Ramat Gan, threatening to cause delays in arrival in Dan region cities outside Tel Aviv.

But the MDA spokesman said that, fortunately, there were no untoward events endangering the public yesterday, despite the sanctions. The union announced that until further notice, a different region will suffer from the

sanctions 24 hours at a time. If restraining orders are not issued and observed, the regions to be affected on Sunday will be Petah Tikva, Herzliya, Kfar Sava, Rosh Ha'ayin, Kiryat Ono and Ariel.

All 40 ambulances and mobile intensive care units serving these areas will be assembled at the Petah Tikva station instead of being distributed among the other stations.

The union is demanding special-duty pay granted to hospital workers, continued allocation of medicals to accompany ambulance drivers, grade rises, and compensation for evacuating victims of accidents involving chemicals and other dangerous substances.

MDA management declared that it fully supports the workers' demands, but urged them not to endanger the public.

American Jews urged to help with genetic testing

By MAGGIE FOX

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — Top genetic researchers joined forces with leaders of the Jewish community on Wednesday to urge Jews to take part in genetic tests they say will benefit Americans in general and people around the world.

But they also said laws were needed to protect people's privacy and ensure that no one was discriminated against because of their genes.

The experts were speaking at a conference called by Hadassah and the Jewish Council for Public Affairs to address fears that Jews were being singled out for genetic research, and stigmatized as being genetically flawed as a result.

"We are all walking around with flaws," Dr. Francis Collins, who heads the National Human Genome Research Institute, told the conference.

Collins said many groups were studied by geneticists, not just Jews. He urged everyone who could to take part in genetic tests if asked and said many people could benefit from knowing about genetic variations that might predispose them to disease.

"Yet we have to make sure that when we are pushing science as hard as we can, which is the only moral thing to do, that we are protecting the issues of privacy," he told a news conference.

Genetic research brings results that can help all people, not just the groups being tested, the conference was told.

"We are trying to impress upon everyone in the world that we are talking about them," said Louise Slaughter, a New York Democratic congresswoman who has introduced legislation that would insure privacy for people who take the genetic tests.

Beit Daniel
The Center for Progressive Judaism in Tel Aviv

Weekly Sunday Seminar in English on Selected Topics

An Introduction to Kabbalah

First of a three-part series

Sunday, 26 April 1998, at 8:00 p.m.
Fee: NIS 5 per study session

Programs for English speakers include:

- Bnei Hillel, discussion of the weekly Torah reading, first Shabbat of each month, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.
- Fundamentals in Judaism every Sunday at 6:00 pm.
- Shavuot: Special study evening following Shavuot-Eve services, 30 May 1998, at 7:00 pm.

Beit Daniel: 62 B'nei Dan St. Tel Aviv
Tel. (03) 544-2740; Fax (03) 544-4030
<http://www.beit-daniel.org.il>

Tandoori
Kohbar

On the occasion of the opening of the new Tandoori Branch at Ramat Mahayal, a special celebration lunch buffet will be served at all our restaurants.

Come enjoy our hospitality and abundant variety of dishes

Eat as much as you want -
Lunch Buffet - Only NIS 48
50% discount for your companion
(Valid till 30.6.98)

Sunday - Friday 12:00 noon - 3:30 p.m.
Including glass of house wine / soft drink.
OPEN DAILY 12:00 - 15:30, 18:00 - 01:00

Tel Aviv, Dizengoff Square, 03-6296185, 03-6296805
Herzliya Pituah, Mercosim Building, 09-9546789, 09-9546702
Ramat Mahayal, 2 Rehov Habarzel, 03-8495818
Holiday Inn Hotel, Jerusalem, 03-6588867, 02-6536667
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The concert will be filmed and produced as a documentary film

Not about nothing

There's nothing to read in the newspaper. There's nothing to watch on television (except a comedy about nothing). I don't have a thing to wear.

Someone wrote this week that when the situation-comedy series *Seinfeld* ends this spring, Jerry will be devastated. "He doesn't have a wife and kids to go home to - only a blank sheet of paper," gushed the sympathetic columnist. That's a blank sheet that brings in a million dollars a week, so spare us.

We lesser media mortals face the same blank page and no million dollars. What's disgusting, of course, is that one shouldn't have to "think of something," especially for a foreign affairs column. Journalists get irritated when confronted by readers who say they don't understand Bosnia or Cambodia or Northern Ireland, because nobody ever explains the issues to them. Or Thailand - but we'll come back to that.

But then journalists sift mountains of information in search of a subject to titillate those elusive bored readers, who claim they want to be informed about their neighbors in the global village. We know they could not be prodded with hot needles into reading an analysis of current events in Saudi Arabia or Sudan. Or Thailand.

Motor mouth
Earlier this week, this column apparently startled some readers by saying (apropos Saddam Hussein) that the banality of evil is matched only by the boredom of chronicling it. It is a sad fact that in this information age, we are all becoming more and more incapable of handling the flow, more unsure of what we ought to know, and more uneasy about missing something vital.

The global village and the information revolution are not only a crock - but a dangerous crock. Instead of becoming universal, we are becoming self-obsessed ghetto morons.

This is serious. When Thai worker Korbua Sumbat was arrested this week on suspicion of a rape-murder, other Thai workers on the kibbutz were locked up under guard. Labor Minister Eli Yishai blabbed nonsensically and disgracefully that "what we fear has come to pass - foreign workers are deadly in Israeli society."

Excuse me? If an Israeli criminal kills someone in New York, should the mayor react with this same racist outburst? Should all Israelis there be confined under armed guard? It's Yishai's mouth that's deadly - some public utterances in Israel are becoming an embarrassment. Was this not a week in which we should be recalling other racist judgments, collective punishments? The Thai government should nip in the bud with a severe protest this attitude towards its perfectly respectable workers in Israel.

String 'em up
What have we become - a racist lynch mob? In the case of the kibbutz gang rape a couple of years ago, were all other kibbutzniks confined to their rooms in collective punishment? Incidentally, it was Sumbat's Thai co-workers who blew holes in his alleged alibi.

Let those who have ever passed over with a yawn any article about Thailand, its culture and people, and who now babble in agreement with Yishai, hang their heads in shame. Yishai would be fired in any other democracy.

Racism in Israel should be a contradiction in terms, anathema. It is becoming a disgrace, and will raise an international outcry if it is perceived as state racism against foreigners. First, the foreign workers were welcomed and encouraged, because they could be trusted - unlike "Arabs." Then they were exploited and cheated. Then they became the butt of jokes about eating dogs and cats. Now all are branded as potential rapist-murderers if one commits a crime.

Israel openly embraced a guest-worker policy, because Israelis could not or would not do the jobs that Palestinians did. It did so without examining the results of guest-worker policies in other democracies and making likely projections for similar patterns here.

There is a price to be paid, as Germany found with its Turks. Guest workers are not faceless economic units to be shuffled about in camps and treated like dirt. Guest workers are social, dignified human beings, scrambling for a living like everyone else. Many will make the best of their new lives - try to integrate, some will marry locals, put down roots, breed children - who then have birth-rights. It is better for a civilized state to acknowledge the social phenomena and provide for them than to stick its head in the sand and its racist butt in the air.

It's a problem, it's an imported problem, but let us not expand it into a redneck racist problem. If one man killed, one criminal man is guilty and deserves the full vigor of the law after a fair trial. And if one criminal is a Thai, does that suddenly make all Thais suspect on a kibbutz that previously lauded them as gentle model workers? Why not blow up their residences too!

The next time we yawn and pass over an article about Thais, or Nigerians, or Burmese, or Finns, it might be worth remembering, in a Jewish state, that nothing is about nothing - except *Seinfeld*. For the rest of us, to be informed is to be civilized - remember the ignorant southern redneck cop in *Driving Miss Daisy*. He sneered about "the old nigger and the old Jew" because they had only one another for company. I wonder why.

Column One



Thomas O'Dwyer

Yeltsin-Duma crunch vote today

By MARTIN NESIRKY

MOSCOW (Reuters) - President Boris Yeltsin met the leaders of both houses of parliament and called his main Communist opponent yesterday, in a final attempt to defuse a month-long crisis over who should be Russia's prime minister.

The State Duma, or lower house, holds a do-or-die vote today on whether to approve the nominee, 35-year-old former energy minister Sergei Kiriyenko, or vote itself out of a job by rejecting him for a third time. That would force an election.

"So, this is the last decisive, deciding one," Yeltsin said with a grin, alluding to a line in the Communist Internationale anthem, as he welcomed Gennady Seleznyov and Yegor Stroyev to his Kremlin office.

"But this is a round table, not a battle," the 67-year-old president added, showing no sign of strain

from leading a country which has been without a full government for a month.

Stroyev is chairman of the Federation Council, or upper house, and Seleznyov, a moderate Communist, is speaker of the opposition-dominated Duma.

The Kremlin said Yeltsin agreed to a suggestion from the two speakers to send deputies a letter asking them to back Kiriyenko. But he ruled out visiting the Duma himself to present the young technocrat to the chamber, saying it was pointless.

Sending a letter to all deputies in the 450-seat Duma is an unusual step that may flatter some parliamentarians and provides ammunition for Seleznyov against Communist hardliners.

But it may not be enough for some parties which wanted Yeltsin to explain his motives for Kiriyenko's candidacy in person and outline his cabinet plans. Yeltsin sacked the old govern-

ment on March 23, saying it had gone soft on reform.

He took another demonstrative step yesterday, phoning Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov to urge him to drop opposition to Kiriyenko and think of the state rather than his party.

"As much as I didn't want to, I brought myself to call Zyuganov," Yeltsin said with evident disdain in televised remarks to journalists before a meeting with Kiriyenko. "You don't believe your ears? I just put the phone down." But keeping the pressure up, Zyuganov told reporters before a crucial plenary meeting of senior party members that the top leadership had agreed late on Wednesday not to waver.

"Altogether 21 members attended and all of them spoke in favour of a tough position and voting against Kiriyenko," Zyuganov said. It was far from clear what the outcome would be at the wider meeting.

"No Communist deputy is afraid of an early election, but people are taking a broader view, because the dissolution of the Duma would mean completely paralyzing the legislative power," Seleznyov told reporters. "Many deputies will vote 'for' but that doesn't mean they support Kiriyenko."

The Communists, who are the biggest Duma force with 138 seats, hold the key to Friday's vote. They helped throw out Kiriyenko's nomination in the other two votes.

A growing band of people, including sacked prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and influential regional governors, have urged the Duma to swallow its pride and back Kiriyenko.

Some parties which voted against before have had a change of heart, but the margin is still too close to call. Kiriyenko needs 226 votes to be approved.

An important factor will be how

deputies decide to vote - openly, by secret ballot, or in an anonymous electronic vote. A secret ballot would allow deputies to go against party lines.

Markets have largely remained unflustered by the crisis, but knock-on factors have rattled some players. Palladium was fixed at another all-time high of \$390.00 an ounce in London, based on worries about Russian exports. Russia is the world's largest supplier of the precious metal.

Yeltsin's nomination of ex-banker Kiriyenko on March 23 to replace Chernomyrdin with a brief to speed up market reforms was controversial from the start.

The Communists and their allies, who dominate the Duma, say Kiriyenko is too young and inexperienced to take on the second most powerful job in Russian politics. And they deeply distrust his liberal views on the economy and social policy.

Turkish elections brought forward to March

ANKARA (Reuters) - Turkish leftist leader Deniz Baykal said yesterday he and Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz had agreed on holding an early general election in March 1999.

"This is an important agreement. I hope that we can keep within this agreement," Baykal told a news conference in parliament after a one-and-a-half hour meeting with Yilmaz.

Opposition powerbroker Baykal said a pre-election government would be formed after parliament returns from its summer recess in October. He said his party may join the new govern-

ment. An independent prime minister would take the place of Yilmaz in the pre-election government, ahead of both general and local polls on March 28, 1999, Baykal said. General elections, last held in December 1995, were not officially due until 2000.

Baykal's Republican People's Party has supported the coalition in key parliamentary votes since it came to power last June, in exchange for assurances that early elections would be held at some point. In recent weeks he renewed pressure on Yilmaz to set a date.



Lebed's french connection

French movie star Alain Delon, left, meets former Russian Security Council chief Alexander Lebed yesterday at the Guard's Mountain, a check point founded by Russian Cossacks in 1628 outside Krasnoyarsk, Siberia. Alain Delon arrived in Krasnoyarsk to support Lebed in his election campaign for the governorship of the region, some 4,000 km. east of Moscow. The elections take place on Sunday. (AP)

Greece mourns former leader Karamanlis, 91

ATHENS (Reuters) - Constantine Karamanlis, who died yesterday at the age of 91, was acknowledged as one of Greece's greatest statesmen this century and the man who restored democracy after the fall of the 1967-1974 military junta.

During a career which began in the 1930s, he was elected to parliament 12 times, was prime minister for a total of 14 years and state president for 10.

Karamanlis used his stature abroad to convince Western leaders that Greece should become the only

Balkan state in the European Union. It joined in 1981.

But Karamanlis is best remembered for the tumultuous crowd scenes when he arrived home in July 1974 after 11 years of self-exile in Paris. His return marked the end of the seven-year military junta, which had used mass arrests and torture.

A tall, abrasive man, Karamanlis often had tough words for fellow Greeks and what he saw as an inclination toward political instability. He prided himself on his long stays in power.

James Earl Ray dies

NASHVILLE (AP) - James Earl Ray, the petty criminal who confessed to assassinating Martin Luther King Jr., then recanted and spent decades seeking a trial, died yesterday. He was 70.

Ray, who was serving a 99-year prison sentence for the 1968 slaying, died of kidney failure

and complications from liver disease, said his brother, Jerry Ray. He had been hospitalized repeatedly since late 1996.

By pleading guilty in March 1969, Ray avoided the possibility of a conviction at trial and a death sentence. He then argued for years that he was coerced into making the plea.

William Gibbons, the lead state prosecutor in Memphis, said Ray's legal petitions aimed at getting his guilty plea thrown out are now over.

"About the only thing I can say is I believe the history books will accurately record that James Earl Ray was the killer of Dr. King," Gibbons said.

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and the entire family

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The "Arava" and "Jordan River" crossing posts on the Jordan frontier will be closed on Monday, April 27, because of a Moslem holiday.

The "Allenby" crossing post will be open, as usual.



Celebrating the Moorish expulsion

An elephant performs for the crowd during the annual celebration of the expulsion of the Moors from Spain in the town of Alcoy, southeastern Spain, on Wednesday. The Moors, a nomadic people of north Africa, arrived in Spain in 711 and were expelled in 1492 after Granada fell to Spanish King Ferdinand V and Queen Isabella. (AP)

Britian-bound nuclear material leaves Georgia amid controversy

By SUHUN BABAYAN

TBILISI (Reuters) - A controversial shipment of nuclear material destined for Britain has left the research reactor outside the Georgian capital Tbilisi where it was being stored, a senior official said yesterday.

"Both the enriched uranium and the spent nuclear fuel have been removed from our reactor," its director Shukri Abramidze said.

Abramidze declined to say whether the nuclear material - comprising four kilos of highly enriched uranium and about one

kilo of spent nuclear fuel - had already left Georgia.

The New York Times said on Tuesday Washington was helping the former Soviet republic to remove nuclear fuel from the research reactor.

On Wednesday, British Prime Minister Tony Blair defended his decision to accept the cache, saying the operation had been kept secret because of fears that rebels opposed to the Georgian government might take control of the research reactor.

The cargo is expected to arrive in Britain later this week on a US

military transport plane. British environmentalists have protested against the government's decision to take it.

Vakhtang Abashidze, spokesman for Georgia's President Eduard Shevardnadze, said Tbilisi had reached an agreement with Washington last year on getting rid of the nuclear material.

He said the agreement also envisaged active US involvement in improving security at the 2,000 megawatt reactor, which was built in the 1950s to conduct experiments at low temperatures.

Georgian Foreign Minister

Irakli Menagarishvili said on Tuesday his impoverished country would get "quite a significant sum for the removal" but declined to give details.

Abashidze said the money would be allocated to the Tbilisi Institute of Physics, which owns the reactor.

Georgia had originally hoped to enlist Russian help in removing the nuclear material but Moscow failed to make good on promises to accept the shipment. Washington went ahead with the operation while keeping Moscow fully informed.

Genscher retires from German parliament

By IAN MADER

BONN (AP) - Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who championed German reunification during his 18 years as German foreign minister, announced his retirement from

parliament yesterday.

The 71-year-old politician received a standing ovation and handshakes from colleagues across Germany's political spectrum after his speech before parliament's lower house.

"You have just heard a passionate patriot," Chancellor Helmut Kohl told the chamber afterward.

Genscher was foreign minister for 18 years, including under Kohl, and retired from that post two years after the 1990 reunification.

Since then, he has joined the chancellor in stressing that Germany needs to bring its economic strength into a united European currency to assure its neighbors it seeks cooperation, not hegemony.

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Jubilee amnesty

The Blatman Committee should have quit while it was ahead. In its report submitted to the president and justice minister on Wednesday, the committee opened by declaring, "The 50th anniversary of the establishment of the state is not in itself a pretext that justifies the granting of a sweeping amnesty, especially in light of the latest figures, which point to a worrisome increase in crime in many areas." Citing "public expectations" as the reason for contradicting itself, the committee proceeded to recommend a small reduction in sentences for sweeping categories of prisoners.

The Blatman Committee, composed of relevant professionals from the president's office and the Justice Ministry, recommended a jubilee "bonus" of a 9 percent reduction in sentence for prisoners who have been recommended for parole, who have served 60 percent of their sentence and qualify for parole, and for first-time offenders serving sentences of up to six months. In addition, the committee recommended that prisoners who had worked to rehabilitate themselves, quit drugs, or who are in poor health should also be considered for sentence reductions. At the same time, the president was urged to consider the danger posed to society by releasing the prisoner, the severity of the crime, and any "concern that the reduction would lead the prisoner or others to condone similar acts in the future."

This last concern — of sending a signal that society does not take certain crimes or crime in general seriously — hangs like a cloud over the entire jubilee amnesty enterprise. The committee itself correctly applied this logic to one area — traffic violations. Contrary to earlier speculation, the committee recommended against any jubilee amnesty for fines and driver's license revocations, arguing that such a measure would send a "non-educational message" to the public. Considering that, last month alone, 35 people lost their lives in 2,406 road accidents — in which some 4,450 were injured — road safety education itself is a priority message that is not getting through.

It is, of course, a great relief that, if the president heeds the Blatman report, we will be spared the increase in road accidents that would likely occur if restrictions were lifted from some of the nation's most dangerous drivers. The idea that the jubilee amnesty would signal that reckless driving is not a serious crime was a particularly

disconcerting prospect that seems to have been avoided. But now the reverse problem has arisen, in that the report did not exempt any other criminals from its sentence-reduction proposal, including murderers, rapists, and drug dealers.

President Ezer Weizman, as a man of the people, should realize the difference between the self-interested and demagogic forces behind the campaign for a broad amnesty and the public's real expectation that their lives and property not be endangered by criminals having their own jubilee celebration. Weizman is wrong in asserting that "something must be done in the 50th year," as if the fixed point is that there must be amnesty, while public safety and the sanctity of the rule of law are luxuries that must be compromised.

"Something" can and should mean that the only increase in pardons, if any, in the jubilee year be from the greater manpower devoted to processing parole requests, not from a relaxation in the standards for parole. And this year, as in any other year, the president can exercise his power in the rare instances in which sentences are truly excessive.

Such excesses can occur, after all, even in the American judicial system, which sentenced Jonathan Pollard to life without parole for a crime that normally results in much shorter sentences, and in violation of the government's own plea-bargain agreement. Pollard committed a serious crime, but after 12 years in jail, he has served longer than any spy for a friendly country and more than most of those who spied for enemies of the United States.

Another celebrated case, which at times unfortunately has been linked to Pollard, is that of Mordechai Vanunu. Unlike Pollard, Vanunu has expressed no remorse for his crime and reportedly said recently that he would do it again. Even though Vanunu disdained democratic methods in advancing his own anti-nuclear cause, his request for parole should be considered as any other, without regard for the international clamor for his release.

The cases of the jubilee amnesty, Pollard's bloated sentence, and the highly-politicized pro-Vanunu campaign, all represent a potential for dangerous distortions of the scales of justice. Regarding the jubilee, Weizman should use his authority and judgment to preserve justice and keep the 50th year celebrations from harming public security.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PESSAH LESSON

Sir, — Uri Regev's "The historic lesson of Pessah" (April 16) was, for me at least, a lesson in humility. I honestly must admit that I do not understand the essence of his message. The distinguished gentleman wanted us to believe that neither our government, the established rabbinate and citizens at large seized the essence of Pessah. I think it would have been more helpful to those of us interested in self-improvement, as Jews and human beings, to have been given something more specific.

Although I have no reason to doubt the sincerity of the author, I have a hard time accepting that only Regev, and perhaps an elite

group known to him, were in possession of the essence of Pessah. His statements bring back memories of my undergraduate and graduate days in the US, where lofty statements of this kind were selectively used by Reform clergy in our campuses for opportunistic purposes, accepting and rejecting the teachings of our sages and our tradition at will to support politically correct issues, while in their personal lives they openly aped the ways of the Gentile.

When we look around our country, we see the enormous effort that both our government and private individuals have made and are making to improve the human

condition of our people.

The religious community in Israel, and the haredim in particular, provide more support to the needy than any other group. We, as a nation, although dealing with existential issues on a daily basis, are willing to risk the presence in our midst of tens of thousands of our avowed enemies, so that they too can improve their lot. I know of no bondage in this country.

I accept that we are far from being a perfect society, but I believe that the Jews of this country are trying to do what is right.

AMRAM YOSEF

Petah Tikva.

MILWAUKEE MESSIAH

Sir, — With great interest and anticipation I looked forward to meeting "the man in the white golf cap" — that is the way he described himself — so we could rendezvous at Angel's in the Bell Tower. After all, he represented something absolutely unique in our long Jewish history.

Think of it! We pray daily, "Next year in Jerusalem" and here comes a messenger who

advertises in *The Jerusalem Post* "Next year in Milwaukee" (April 6), inviting readers who are thinking of moving to the US, to "Begin thinking Milwaukee, Wisconsin."

He proved to be a grandfatherly man, accompanied by his grandchild, who comes to Israel every Pessah to visit his children. He said he had advertised in Jewish publications in the US

and had received inquiries from Israel, therefore why not advertise in *The Jerusalem Post*?

We have had false Messiahs in the past but none of them offered us Milwaukee!

MURRAY SAFRAN
Chairperson, AACI Jerusalem Region.

Jerusalem.

WATCHDOG FOR DEMOCRACY

Sir, — Christopher Walker, *Times of London* Israel correspondent, blasts *The Jerusalem Post* (March 23) for publishing an advertisement criticizing CNN, which he perceives as being "biased, unsavory and underhand" towards his colleague, CNN correspondent Walter Rodgers. Actually the true facts presented in this advertisement were not only understated, but contained no direct criticism of Rodgers, although

such criticism would be quite legitimate in many people's opinion! What makes Mr. Walker think the media should be above criticism?

To top it all, one can only gasp in disbelief at Walker's cheeky totalitarian demand that *The Jerusalem Post* gag "paid" dissent and criticism. This undemocratic proposal from a member of the media, the very profession which rejects censorship for itself, purportedly the "watch-

dog" of democracy is an insult to our intelligence.

Though I utterly disagree with the advert of "The Council for Peace and Security" of March 27, it has every right to be published. The only ads that should be censored or refused are those promoting racial hatred and intolerance, or inciting to crimes of violence and sexual perversions.

ISAAC KINGSTON
Tel Aviv.

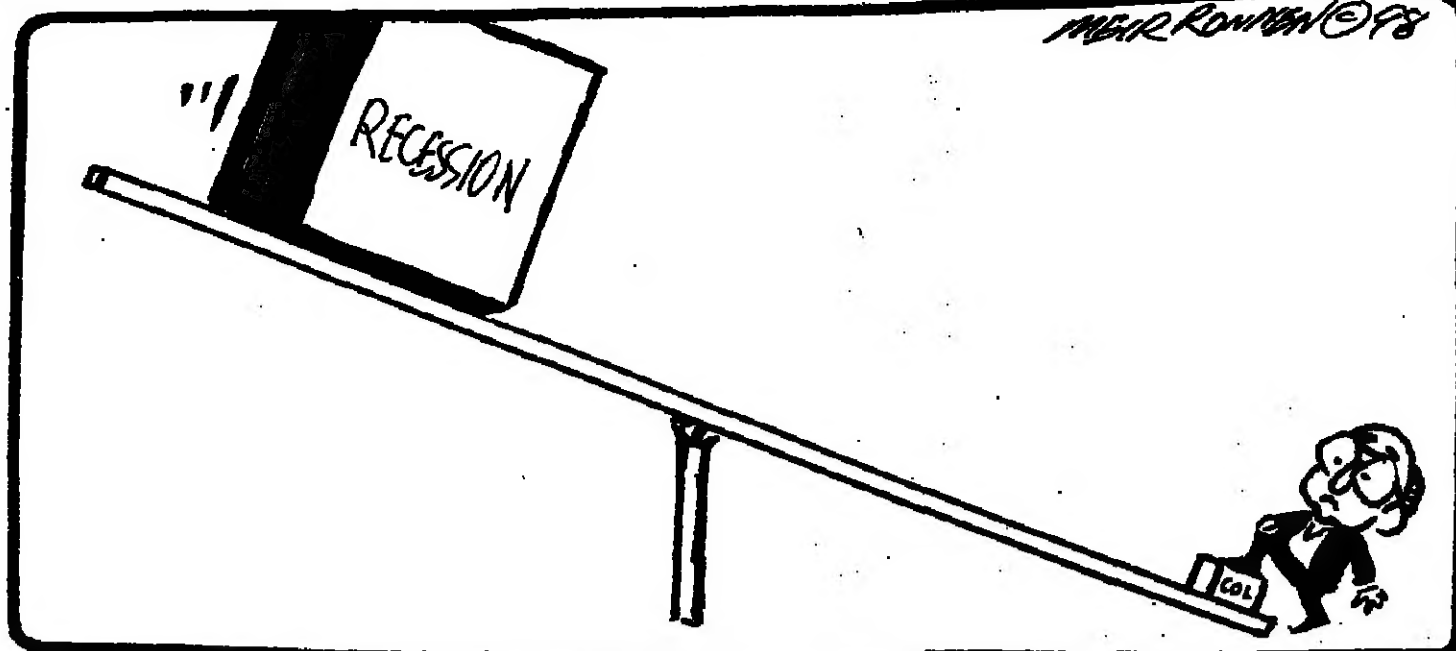
FROM OUR ARCHIVES

65 years ago: On April 24, 1933, *The Palestine Post* reported that World War I scenes of refugees besieging the relief offices were being re-enacted in Berlin where hundreds of applicants gathered outside the Palestine Immigration Office

demanding visas to enable them to emigrate to Palestine. The enormous congestion was due to the fact that only one thousand certificates were available. 25 years ago: On April 24, 1973, *The Jerusalem Post* reported that a new period of

tension between France and Israel appeared inevitable in the wake of the dispute over whether the French-built Mirage fighter bombers had been transferred from Libya to Egypt.

Alexander Zvielli



The abandonment of the Jews

MOSHE ARENS

On Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day we obey the biblical injunction "Zachor: Remember what the Amalekites did to you."

We cannot forget the many accomplices the Germans found among the Ukrainians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Romanians and Hungarians, nor the indifference with which most of the world watched the German attempt to exterminate the Jewish people. In effect, the Jewish people were abandoned to their tragic fate by the governments of nations engaged in battling Germany during World War II.

The story of two ships, loaded with refugees seeking a haven from the Nazi terror, symbolizes the refusal of countries throughout the world to grant a refuge — even if temporary — to the Jews fleeing the German murder machine. The *St. Louis* and the *Sztruma* were two among many such ships, barges and boats — all truly life boats — that sailed the seas seeking a safe harbor in which to discharge their human cargo.

In 1939, the 930 Jewish refugees from Germany on the *St. Louis* were refused entry to Cuba. The ship sailed on to Miami in the hope that US immigration authorities would allow the refugees to land, it was shadowed by a US Coast

Guard cutter with orders to prevent any refugees from disembarking. To pleas from the Joint Distribution Committee, the State Department replied that there would be no compromise of US immigration laws. The *St. Louis*

already what Churchill called "the beginning of the end" for Germany. Rommel had been beaten at El Alamein, American troops had landed in North Africa, the Germans had suffered a major defeat at Stalingrad, and

The Holocaust would probably not have happened, certainly not in its full dimension, had it not been for the world's indifference to the fate of the Jews

was forced to return to Europe.

The *Sztruma*, a 180-ton Romanian vessel carrying 769 Jewish refugees, left Constanza for Palestine in December 1941. Overloaded and endangered by a leaking hull, the ship broke down off Istanbul. The Turks would not let the passengers land unless they received permission from the British to proceed to Palestine. The British refused and the Turks towed the *Sztruma*, which had lost its engines, out to sea, where it sank. There were only two survivors, who managed to swim to shore.

When the Warsaw Ghetto revolt erupted in April 1943 it was

German cities were being bombed day and night. The allies were winning the war on land, at sea, and in the air. At this very time it was already well known that the Germans were killing over 100,000 Jews every month, with the explicit aim of exterminating the Jewish people.

Much could have been done to slow, or possibly halt, this demonic campaign. But the Warsaw Ghetto fighters received no aid nor even a sign of encouragement. During the ensuing two years, until Germany surrendered in May 1945, halting the slaughter of the Jews never became a strategic objective of the Allies.

The real heroes

ARIEL SHARON

AS I search among all these personalities and events, what do I recall as a truly special experience. I have chosen one picture, a picture which describes a terrible tragedy.

My platoon and I are stretched out beneath the olive trees beside ancient Hulda in the midday heat. Pre-battle reflections. We blend in

inkling that among the established community in Israel, too many people were tied up defending their own settlements. Despite Ben-Gurion's pressure, many had not yet even enlisted. And more than a few members of the moneyed classes of the period had sent their children abroad so that they would not be "swallowed up" by the war.

The Gahal soldiers arrived unknown after surviving the horrors of the Holocaust. They fought unknown, fell unknown, and many of them have remained anonymous until today

with the pebbly soil as if we were an inseparable part of it. Deep rooted. The sense of a homeland, a belonging, ownership.

Suddenly, close by, a truck comes to a halt and unloads new recruits.

They have a foreign appearance, they are somewhat pale. They wear sleeveless sweaters, gray pants, striped shirts. A mélange of languages. Names such as Herschel, Jan, Meitek. Peter and Yonzi were thrown in the air. They are so out of place among the olive trees, the rocks, the yellowing corn.

They had arrived directly from the death camps in Europe, across sealed borders, in boats bearing "illegal" immigrants, only to be sent once again to internment camps, this time to Cyprus by the British. From there they had been shipped directly to the front.

I looked hard at them. They undressed. Their flesh was white. They tried on the uniforms, struggling with the straps of their army pouches, assisted by the commanders who had just met them.

This all took place in silence, as if they accepted their fate. None of them shouted, "Give us time to breathe after the terrible years we have just been through."

It was as though they understood that this was yet another stage in the final battle for Jewish existence. They obviously had no

These soldiers were foreign recruits (Gahal) commonly referred to as "Gahalitzim" in a disdainful tone. There were no songs sung for them and no one conversed with them around the bonfire. They were not limited. They had no one waiting at home with whom to share their experiences; they had no homes. They were people from another planet, with experiences that were alien to us, youngsters like ourselves but hundreds of years older than we were.

IN Jerusalem's Mt. Herzl military cemetery, in the mass grave dug for our company, B Company, Battalion 32, Alexandroni Brigade, four of the 52 soldiers who fell in one battle were nameless.

For 50 years, whenever I have passed the headstone, I have stopped and wondered who they were, where they came from, who their families were.

Are any of those immigrant soldiers still alive? Has anyone ever looked for them? Perhaps they are still looking. I have no answer. No one has an answer.

Some of them had been through the horrors of the Holocaust as children and youngsters, surviving only to reach Israel a year or two before the War of Independence and join the fighting. I remember some of those

TO THIS day, it is incomprehensible that over 500,000 Hungarian Jews were taken to the gas chambers in mid-1944, after the war had essentially been won.

At the end of March, the Germans had decided to take over Hungary. One month later the mass deportation of Hungarian Jews to the death camps began. By then the Red Army was nearing the Hungarian border, the Allies had captured Rome, and all of Germany was under intense daily bombardment. Yet, in the following five months, over 500,000 Hungarian Jews were murdered.

The news reached the capitals of the world, as neutral observers in Budapest reported daily on what was happening. Requests to the Allies to bomb Auschwitz, or the rail lines leading to it, so as to impede the slaughter, were rejected out of hand. One man, Raoul Wallenberg, succeeded in saving thousands. It is an indication of what could have been done had the Allied governments taken action.

The Holocaust would probably not have happened, certainly not in its full dimension, had it not been for the indifference of the world to the fate of the Jewish people during those tragic years. It is in this context that it should be remembered, and it is this lesson that the world hopefully has learned.

who were under my command, on the eve of the war, at the agricultural school in Magdiel, and I shall mention some of those who were killed or injured.

Michael Klein, a handsome, strong young survivor from Hungary who fell in the battle at Nebi Samuel. Many years later his sister arrived in search of details, but who knew him? Who knew how he was killed?

And Joshua Mendelmacher and Israel Koren from Lodz in Poland. No one has visited their graves since the day they fell in 1948.

And there were those who were not killed, Shimon Leibovitz was seriously injured and Shimon Miudovnik was held prisoner for five years, between the age of 11 and 16, at various concentration camps. He was the sole survivor of six brothers and sisters, and he lived through the Buchenwald March of Death. Both served in the Palmah Harel Brigade and were wounded at Nebi Samuel.

I also recall a true war hero, Mordechai Doziminer, a hero of the battle for Latrun. He was killed after volunteering for an assignment from which it was impossible to return alive. Does he have any relatives?

And there were so many others like him, numbers imprinted on their arms, firebrands snatched from the furnace.

Fifty years have passed since then. Now, as we celebrate Israel's jubilee year, we honor the fallen, the army brigades and various forces, the Mahal (foreign) volunteers — fewer than the Jewish people should have sent, but nonetheless good people who came and volunteered.

I particularly wish to thank all those unknown soldiers who survived the upheavals of the Holocaust — a feat which required considerable bravery — who dreamed of reaching safety and when they finally arrived once again took up arms in our defense.

So many of them fell in battle. They, the Gahal soldiers, arrived unknown, fought unknown, fell unknown, and many of them have remained anonymous until today. In my mind, they were the real heroes.

POSTSCRIPT

PRODDED BY angry correspondence from thousands of Americans, Merriam-Webster has assembled a task force to come up with new definitions for the word "nigger" and hundreds of other "offensive" words found in its collegiate dictionary.

Nigger is defined in the current Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary as "a black person, usually taken to be offensive." With only minor revisions, that definition has stood for nearly a century. But a

nationwide campaign questioning the definition and the word's proper role in the English language has caused the dictionary publisher to take the unusual step toward redefining it.

"We are definitely looking at it very closely," said Deborah Burns, director of marketing for Merriam-Webster Inc. "It is very, very likely that there will be a change in the definitions of all offensive words."

The leaders of the effort to strike or rephrase its definition say

Merriam-Webster portrays the word foremost as a synonym for black people while noting that it's a slur almost as an afterthought. The campaigners have threatened a boycott.

"We came to the conclusion that maybe our dictionary is not as clearly written as it could be," Burns said. A panel of lexicographers and other experts has been reviewing the definitions of hundreds of offensive words, she said. The words include racial epithets, body parts and profanity.

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language defines the word first as "Vulgar" and then as a "Negro or member of any dark-skinned people. An offensive term used derogatorily."

Random House defines the word as "Disparaging and Offensive." Merriam-Webster dictionaries list the oldest definition of a word first and the newest last. When the word nigger came into use four centuries ago it literally meant a black person.

IDF and the haredim

GERALD M. STEINBERG

The record of Israel's accomplishments would not have been possible without the strong emotional dedication of the Jewish people to the goals of Zionism. Inspired by Herzl's concept of political Zionism, Jews from all over the world devoted themselves to these goals. Motivated by ideological commitment and idealism, some began to return to Eretz Yisrael, while millions paid their annual dues to the Zionist movement and took part in rallies.

There was no government or external force to press them to take these actions, but rather they were motivated by the intense belief in the importance of the goals and the

possession, if enacted, will only increase the haredi community's resentment and alienation, and will sharpen the divisiveness within Israeli society. If forced into the IDF, the haredim will make poor soldiers, lacking the ideological commitment and sense of purpose that was, and among many groups still is, characteristic of service in the IDF.

In a practical sense, after having served thirty years in the army, including as chief of staff, Ehud Barak surely recognizes that the best soldiers are the ones who are highly motivated. Barak himself volunteered to take part in the rescue of the passengers aboard hijacked aircraft and in retaliatory

At some point, without outside coercion, many young haredim will accept the need to rejoin the Jewish people and accept their share of the common burden

desire to contribute to the revival of the Jewish nation.

However, almost from the beginning, some groups did not share this idealism and sense of responsibility for the common fate. In particular, the haredim kept their distance from Zionism, and increasingly separated themselves from the Jewish people. Although there are many different sub-sects among the haredim — with different attitudes towards Zionism — most avoided service in the IDF.

What began as a minor concession, when David Ben-Gurion exempted a handful of yeshiva students each year from military service, has become a gaping hole in the national fabric. Each year, tens of thousands of otherwise draft-eligible haredim receive automatic exemptions. This has created a large resentment among the rest of the population. Both secular Israelis and the non-haredi religious public are fed up with ballooning exemptions for these yeshiva students.

Responding, or rather capitalizing on this resentment, Labor Party leader Ehud Barak is preparing to introduce legislation to force conscription on the haredim, or at least some form of national service. Polls show that the vast majority of the haredi population is unlikely to vote for a Labor Party candidate, so there are no votes to lose in this proposal. Indeed, it is clear that Barak's proposal is designed primarily to revive sagging political fortunes.

SUBSTANTIVELY, the results of this legislation will be the opposite of its declared intentions. When the power of the state is used to coerce, this leads to resentment and heightened civil conflict. One of Israel's greatest failures is the product of government efforts to force immigrants to settle in remote development towns.

Similarly, the forced attempts to strip these immigrants of their original culture and religious heritage and create a "new" and secular Israeli were doomed to fail. Eventually, the political leaders learned that people must be allowed to choose their own homes, jobs, and lifestyles.

By the same token, Barak's pro-

posals, if enacted, will only increase the haredi community's resentment and alienation, and will sharpen the divisiveness within Israeli society. If forced into the IDF, the haredim will make poor soldiers, lacking the ideological commitment and sense of purpose that was, and among many groups still is, characteristic of service in the IDF.

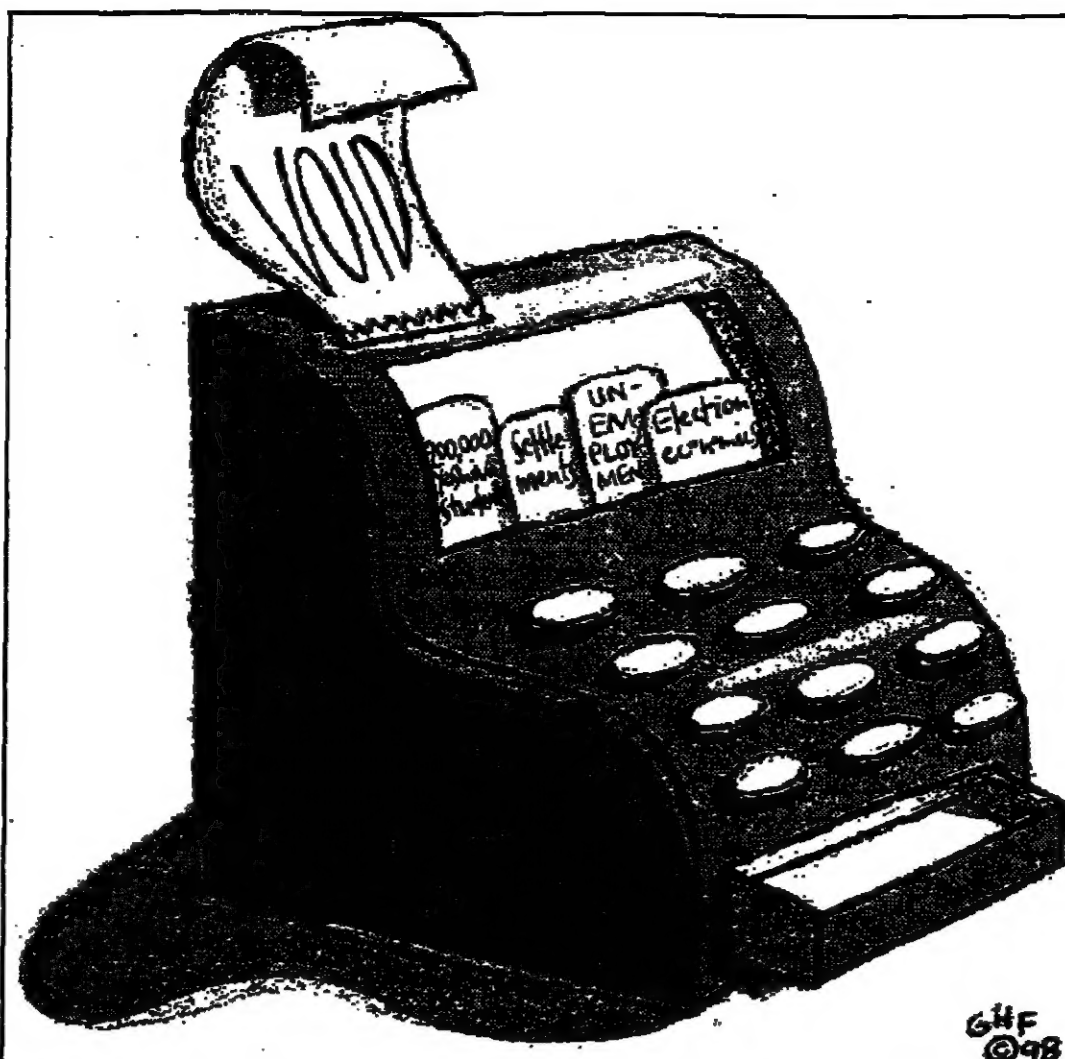
The only realistic solution to the haredi-IDF problem is a long-term effort designed to change the attitudes of the haredim towards their fellow Jews and Israelis, and regarding their obligations to the nation.

Haredim already live with very strong contradictions. On the one hand, they benefit from the economic successes and security provided by living in Israel (and they also suffer, no less than any other group, from the threats posed by terrorist attacks). At the same time, they are aware they contribute far less than others to the material well-being and safety of the state. To resolve this moral contradiction, they comfort themselves, and attempt to sell to the others, the idea that by studying Torah (at least officially), these young men are also contributing to Jewish survival. In an environment of assimilation and ignorance of Jewish culture and tradition, they may even have a point.

However, it is clearly absurd to believe that the continuity of the Jewish people, and the spiritual survival of the nation, requires the annual addition of tens of thousands of haredi "students" who claim that their "profession is Torah" and do not have time to defend the nation.

There are many other religious Israelis who manage to combine both worlds successfully. It is also obvious that 50 years of ever-increasing numbers of yeshiva students have certainly not improved the spiritual level of the nation or of the haredim themselves.

The automatic army exemptions are a sham, and even they know it. The moral contradictions will eventually have an impact on haredi attitudes and society. At some point, without coercion from the outside, many young haredim will accept the need to rejoin the Jewish people and accept their share of the common burden. This is the message Ehud Barak and other potential leaders should be sending, rather than talking about forced conscription and other abuses of state power.



Different priorities

MARK A. HELLER

Last month, another 10,000 families joined the ranks of those who will not be in much of a mood to celebrate Israel's 50th anniversary. The March increase in joblessness brings the total unemployment rate to 8.2% (as opposed to about 6.5% when this government came into office), and analysts expect that it will rise to 9%, or even 9.5%, by the end of the year.

Once upon a time, before the age of big government, the economy was something separate from politics, and governments were no more held responsible for bad economic performance than they were for bad weather.

But that was long ago, and even minimalist, laissez-faire politicians — like Benjamin Netanyahu — now acknowledge that government is responsible for providing the human and physical infrastructure, the fiscal and monetary framework, and the political atmosphere within which the market economy should operate. It is therefore not just a cheap shot to contrast the situation now with that of mid-1996.

Unemployment figures are a symptom of broader economic trends, which have almost all turned negative since the last elections. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics, Israeli gross domestic product grew at an average annual rate of 6% between 1992 and 1995 — enough to catapult the Israeli economy to European levels; in 1996 and 1997, the average annual growth rate was 3.2%, and by early 1998, the rate had dropped to recessionary levels.

This slowdown was felt in almost every sector, but especially in tourism and construction. In 1992-1995, gross investment grew by an average annual rate of 7.7%; in 1996-1997, the average rate was 1.9% (in 1997, it actually dropped by 5.1%, and in the industrial sector, the decrease was 15%). Even the government's major

"accomplishment" — the decline in the inflation rate — is not really a sign of successful economic policy, but rather of declining demand resulting from high interest rates and slowed growth.

Of course, it would not be fair to

A government that pays 200,000 yeshiva students to study is just buying a Knesset majority

lay responsibility for all these problems at the feet of the government. Tourist cancellations, for example, are caused, in the first instance, by terrorist acts, which also took place under the previous government, and the short-term effect is entirely predictable — in Israel as well as in neighboring countries such as Egypt. And the decline in skilled immigrants from the former Soviet Union is as much a function of improving conditions there as it is of stagnant or deteriorating conditions here. It is also true that growth under the previous government was partly stimulated by budget deficits that were threatening to get out of hand and could not have continued even if it had been re-elected.

BUT this is no consolation for the 163,000 Israelis who are now out of work, the thousands more who may well join them in the next few months, and the many entrepreneurs and business owners who are also facing rather bleak prospects.

And it is vital to understand that this is a man-made problem, not an act of nature. A government constrained by coalition requirements as well as by its own ideology from moving ahead on the peace process cannot contribute to

the expectation of future progress and stability that will bring back the tourists, or the immigrants, or the foreign investors.

A government that pays 200,000 yeshiva students to study is just buying a Knesset majority, not investing in the human capital of university and technical college students who are acquiring skills now in order to produce goods or services in the future that the rest of society and the rest of the world will want to buy.

And a government that spends money on settlements is diverting money from the educational training and physical infrastructure that increases the ability of labor to move to capital or capital to labor, i.e., from improving the competitiveness of the economy.

It is possible, indeed likely, that this government will conjure up some short-term gimmicks to deflect the wrath of the unemployed and the anxiety of their friends and relatives. Indeed, there are some instructive precedents, particularly in the realm of "election economics."

Perhaps the most famous was Yoram Aridor's last-minute tax reform that suddenly enabled Israeli workers to buy little 1300cc Subarus and persuaded them to vote Menachem Begin back into power in 1981.

Within a few years, of course, the country had soared into the stratosphere of hyperinflation and spent almost all its foreign currency reserves, but the main objective — getting re-elected — had been achieved.

Maybe the same kind of thing will work again. Or maybe the voters will understand this time that a return to stable economic growth really requires a set of priorities altogether different from those of this coalition, and that the only way to eliminate the underlying cause of these unemployment figures is to raise the unemployment rate — by one.

Middle Israel

AMOTZ ASA-EL

Eureka

Like Archimedes who exclaimed "I found it" after finally discovering how to reconcile flotation, gravity, and weight loss, Benjamin Netanyahu this week found his own way to keep afloat after having lost a cumulative 10 percent of his original coalition.

Unfortunately, what the prime minister said after having come forth with his discovery was not "eureka," but "Moledet."

Bibi's temptation, to be sure, is great.

First, a pair of solid Knesset votes during any future no-confidence vote is nothing to scoff at. After all, Moledet is not the kind of leper Meir Kahane was, nor is it any longer the farce it used to be back when it was represented by the flamboyant, not to say nut case, Rabbi Yosef Ba-

problem with Moledet is not in its theoretical fantasies concerning an ethnic redistribution in the Holy Land and its environs, but its practical inhibitions when it comes to compromising anything Israeli to anything Arab.

Ironically, the latest coalition jockeying came just when Netanyahu merrily agreed to go to London for a second-redo-employment summit.

London, for those who may have forgotten, is where King Hussein and then-foreign minister Shimon Peres hammered out in 1987 an agreement which could have averted the infatuation and much of the damage subsequently inflicted on Israel through the Oslo Accords. Had Israel endorsed that agreement, it would have ceased to rule

Last time the Likud embraced Moledet it ended up losing power, facing Oslo and ceding Hebron

Gad, whose gimmicks were an embarrassment to the entire parliament. If anything, Rehavam Ze'evi's current second-in-command, Benny Elon, is widely respected as a learned, diligent and, in many respects, even progressive legislator.

Secondly, Moledet's turbo-charged nationalism stops short of the illegitimate. While the faction does use tastelessly xenophobic rhetoric, it does not smoothly correspond to the neo-fascist labels which are often attached to it. Yes, it prefers — not unlike much of the Left — that Arab and Jew part ways, but unlike our various Kahane splinter groups and Europe's assorted Le Pen types, Moledet is careful to phrase all its nativist ideas in civic rather than racial or religious terms, and seems to stop short of fomenting violence.

Finally, Ze'evi himself, while not the average Middle Israeli's cup of tea, is no more awkward to host in a cabinet meeting than are, say, the equally militant Rafael Eitan and Ariel Sharon.

True, Ze'evi is the kind of general who while awash with post-'67 chauvinism caged, they say, a troupe of lions with which he would parade through camp before dusk; and surely, whoever nicknamed him Gandhi must have made the Indian pacifist's ashes fly in the Ganges. Yet at the end of the day, retired generals like Ze'evi, Eitan, and Sharon are basically local versions of those Prussian Junkers who longed for military discipline, social conservatism, and economic protectionism. They may be annoying, but granting these "give 'em-nothing" militants cabinet seats is no more illegitimate, or unwise than it was for Yitzhak Rabin to bring "give 'em-all" Yossi Sarid into the thick of negotiations with Yasser Arafat.

SO WHY, then, not say eureka now that Gandhi may be about to take his seat around the cabinet table? Because what may keep Bibi afloat might leave the peace process, and the rest of us, sinking. In other words, the

over West Bank Arabs before, rather than after, encountering the uprising which unnecessarily exposed the limits of our power. It also would have returned the Palestinians to the Hashemites' tutelage, rather than to the PLO's bosom.

The reason none of this transpired was the Likud's stubborn insistence that Israel compromise nothing. That is also what disharmonized a previously workable Likud-Labor partnership, and what three years later paved the way to Moledet's first brush with incumbency, when Ze'evi became a minister-without-portfolio in Yitzhak Shamir's last cabinet.

Moledet and the Likud rightly assumed that most Israelis favored in principle a greater, ethnically harmonious Israel. What they refused to acknowledge was that while most accepted that prospect's theoretical desirability, they also questioned its political feasibility.

Since that flat rejection of the 1987 London accord and the hollow Jordan-is-Palestine propaganda cacophony, which accompanied it, with then-UN ambassador Netanyahu playing first fiddle — the Likud has endorsed Oslo, met Arafat, and ceded Hebron. Apparently it learned a great deal about the limits of Israeli power and Palestinian servility.

Moledet has not. Now, joining hands with Ze'evi's territorial maximalism would mean the Likud has, after all, forgotten nothing and learned nothing since the days when it arrogantly shot down a Jordanian-dominated settlement which in comparison with its Oslo substitute would have been a panacea.

And if this logic doesn't impress Netanyahu, let him bear in mind that it was long after veering to the far right that the Likud lost power. In retrospect, it was the ironic inversion of Labor's subsequent embrace of Meretz, and the ultimate Archimedean lever, pulley, and "place on which to stand" — in the opposition.

An enemy everyone can hate

JONATHAN ROSENBLUM

determined that haredi youth groups are not Zionist enough to receive Education Ministry funding.

Bnos Agudat Israel, the largest of the haredi youth groups, has received funding — albeit minimal — from the Education Ministry for over thirty years. In 1996, the Education Ministry completed a rigorous survey of youth groups to determine the number of members in each. That survey — from which Bnos was originally excluded — revealed that Bnos was entitled to at least four times more money than it was then receiving, and that the two largest youth groups — Scouts and HaNoar HaOved v'Halomed — were receiving much more than they should have.

Bnos's very success in the ministry's survey sealed its fate. Almost simultaneously with the startling results, the ministry began drafting new funding criteria requiring, inter alia, that the groups "educate their members in the world view of Judaism and Zionism," and to view army service or parallel national service as an obligatory value.

Then attorney-general Michael Ben-Yair objected to the proposed criteria, and agreed to their promulgation only after attaching his stipulation that the

regulations permit funding of Arab youth groups advocating the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, as long as they recognize the sovereignty

Homosexual youth are a favored minority; haredi youth are not

of the Knesset. Typically, he made no mention of haredim.

After promulgation of the new regulations, the largest secular youth groups brought suit in the Supreme Court challenging the ministry's continued funding of haredi youth groups. And last month, the Supreme Court ordered the haredi groups to return funds already disbursed to them by the ministry and those funds to be apportioned among the remaining youth groups.

NOW clearly youth groups, haredi or otherwise, have no entitlement to state funding. Where I come from youth groups sell cookies door to door to support themselves. But if the state chooses to fund ideological youth groups, it has no business

distinguishing between the content of their ideologies, as long as they advocate no illegality. The American Supreme Court has repeatedly struck down statutes that attempt to condition government benefits on the expression of opinion or belief.

Yet the Supreme Court here, usually so eager to import "progressive" views from abroad, did not address or even notice the glaring government infringement on free speech in the ministry's regulations. Neither, apparently, did plaintiff's attorney Avigdor Feldman, one of the founders of the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, or Meretz Knesset member Ran Cohen, who helped draft the ministry regulations. (For Israeli civil libertarians, freedom from religion and the religious seems to be the highest civil liberty.)

The court's decision was determined, not by principle, but by the identity of the parties. Thus the same court which recently created out of whole cloth an unprecedented "right" for homosexual teenagers to have their lifestyle celebrated on state television, ignored the rights of haredi teenagers to express their beliefs. Homosexual youth are a favored minority; haredi youth are not.

In his elegantly written opinion, filled with scorn for the

haredi groups and the Education Ministry supervisors, Justice Mishael Cheshin assumed that the definition of Zionism today is still so clear-cut that he could determine from his own general knowledge that haredim are anti-Zionists and the other groups are good Zionists. Even a post-Zionist court still knows an anti-Zionist when it sees one. Evidence that haredi youth groups stress love of the Land and that its graduates are far less likely to join the Israeli diaspora would have been irrelevant for Cheshin.

Nor did he inquire as to whether the compliance of secular groups with the ministry regulations was subject to any closer scrutiny by the ministry than was that of haredi groups before ordering the returned monies to be disbursed to the secular groups. How, for instance, do those groups inculcate the value as Israel as a Jewish state — another of the ministry's requirements?

Actually that last question is no problem for a court that has long since determined that the term "Jewish state," enshrined in the Basic Laws, is a meaningless superfluity, synonymous with "democratic state." Still, one wonders, how Arab Scout troops are imbued with the values of Zionism or army service.

Interesting how a court usually so zealous in the protection of minorities, in this instance, led the baying hounds.

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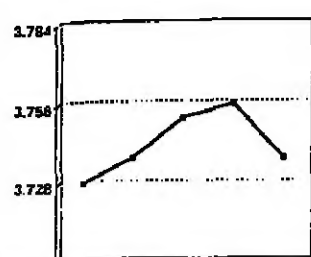
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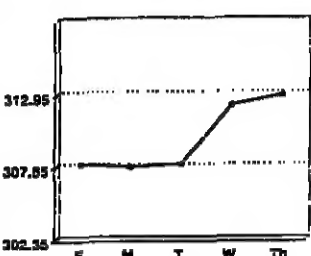
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DOLLAR / SHEKEL

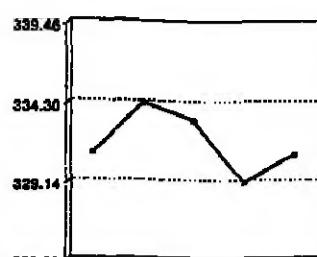


GOLD

\$ per ounce

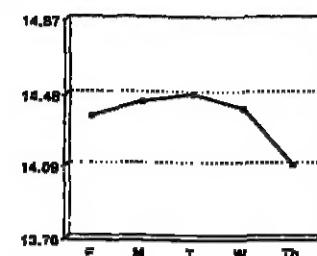


MAOF INDEX

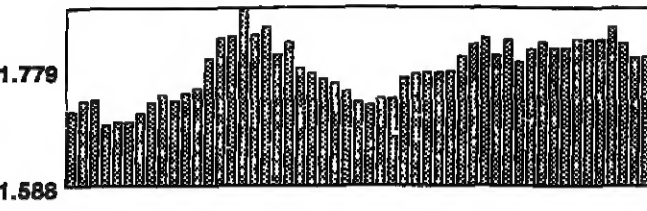


OIL

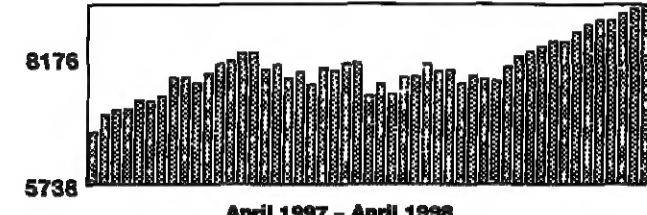
\$ per barrel of Brent crude



DOLLAR / DEUTSCHEMARK



DOW JONES INDUST. AVG.



BITS & BYTES

By NINA GILBERT

Tadiran Scopus wins \$3m. project in Ukraine

Tadiran Scopus has won a contract, valued in its first phase at \$3 million, to supply digital video equipment to the Ukrainian Space Agency, Ukracosmos, as part of a project to deploy satellite distribution systems for Ukraine's national television network.

The equipment is to be supplied in four months. Tadiran joined in an international consortium to compete in the tender, which includes Antech from Italy, which will coordinate the project, and Ukrainian manufacturers and service providers.

Tadiran Scopus is a subsidiary of Tadiran Ltd., the country's largest electronics company. It is a maker of digital video broadcasting products, including conditional access systems. Last year, the company decided to enter into direct sales activities, which resulted in the penetration of new markets.

Orbotech makes \$3.8m. deal with Taiwan firm

Gold Circuit Electronics Ltd., one of Taiwan's leading printed circuit board manufacturers, this week purchased \$3.8 million worth of optical scanning equipment from Orbotech. The deal follows a purchase six months ago of \$1.7m.

The Taiwanese company said the equipment was purchased as part of the expansion of its production capacity. Orbotech, the Yavne-based maker of automated optical inspection systems for printed circuit boards, has four subsidiaries abroad, including in Boston, Brussels, Hong Kong and Tokyo.

TTI to supply Brazilian cellular network

TTI Team Telecom has won a contract to supply the new Brazilian cellular telephone network with its Netrac management system. The award is TTI's second major contract in Brazil.

"The B-band cellular market in Brazil consists of ten new operation licenses that cover all regions of the country and represents one of the greatest opportunities in the communications market today," according to TTI CEO Meir Lipshes, who said the company aims to expand further in the Latin American market.

Canadians buy 20% of Meitav Software

A group of Canadian investors recently purchased 20 percent of Meitav Software Systems in a private placement valued at \$1 million. The investment, the first in Israel by Amon Corporation of Toronto, will pave the way for the company to develop more software products for the Israeli financial market and the possibility of foreign activities.

NIS 100 bills most favored by Israelis

By Jerusalem Post Staff

One hundred shekel bills are the most popular notes, according to the annual report that the Bank of Israel Currency Department published yesterday.

The value of all NIS 100 bills used by the public was NIS 4.3 billion at the end of 1997, which is equal to 44 percent of all the cash in circulation. The value of all NIS 200 and NIS 50 notes in circulation amounted to NIS 2.9b. and NIS 2.2b. respectively.

The bank said that the number of NIS 100 bills in use equals some 36% of all notes, compared with only 20% in 1995. Despite the NIS 100 bill's popularity, NIS 50 bills make up 37% of all notes, down from 54% two years ago.

The total value of the cash in circulation (notes and bills) rose at the end of 1997 to NIS 10.4b. from

NIS 9.2b. in 1996. It rose by an annual average of 4.3% in real terms, compared with a rise of 8.3% in 1997.

The volume per capita (the average amount of cash) held by Israeli residents stood at NIS 1,756 at the end of 1997, compared with NIS 1,601 in 1996. It should be noted, however, that the sum also includes cash held by the business sector and banks.

The central bank attributed this rise to falling inflation, saying that in times of low inflation the public holds more money in cash as it keeps its value.

The currency department also said that the "5,000 years to Jerusalem" coin, which was minted on Independence Day two years ago, won a prize as the "coin with the highest historical significance for 1996" in the annual coin competition held by World Coin News.

Fishman acquires 3.5% of IDB holdings for NIS 108m.

By DAN GERSTENFELD

Discount Investments sold a 3.5 percent stake in its parent company IDB Holdings Corporation yesterday to entrepreneur Eliezer Fishman for NIS 108 million.

Last December, Discount Investments announced the sale of another 9.5% of IDB to the American investment bank Goldman Sachs Group for NIS 280 million.

Discount received the holdings in its parent company in August as part of deal in which it sold its 26.7% holding in tool manufacturer Iscar to the Wertheimer family, in exchange for \$130m. in cash and the IDB

stake.

It has been speculated in the press that Fishman was interested in buying a stake in Israel Discount Bank, of which IDB holds 13.17%.

Sources close to the Recanat family, which controls IDB, said, however, that there are no talks about a possible sale of the company's holdings in Bank Discount to Fishman or anyone else.

According to rumors, Fishman, together with US investor Jeffrey Keill, is interested in acquiring control of Israel's third-largest bank. A consortium led by Keill and Fishman failed to win the tender to buy

Bank Hapoalim last year.

Recently, a mysterious buyer started acquiring shares in Bank Discount on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange. Market sources speculate that Keill and Fishman may be involved in the purchases.

Analysts said that Discount Investments is holding too much money in cash. The company holds already almost \$200m. in cash and is expected to receive another NIS 580m. from contractor Yitzhak Tshuva for a 37.6% stake in Delek Israel Fuel Corp.

Most of the cash that Discount holds came from the sale of its stake in Iscar. The company raised another NIS 195m. earlier this

year from the sale of its shares in Clal Israel to IDB Development Corporation.

Discount Investments has stated in the past that it is looking for new investments as it intends to focus mainly on communications, infrastructure, and financial services. Analysts said, however, that the holding company will have difficulty finding investments as profitable as Iscar.

IDB Holdings is one of the country's largest holding companies, with investments in electronics, communications, insurance, real estate and construction, banking and brokerage services, and a variety of industrial business.

Cvalim sells unit for \$55m.

By DAN GERSTENFELD

Cvalim, the Electric Wire and Cable Company of Israel, said yesterday it agreed to sell its cable manufacturing activity to a subsidiary of Cable Systems Holding Company for \$55 million.

The deal comes only two months after Clal Industries & Investment announced the sale of 51 percent in Zion Cables United Works, Israel's second-largest cable manufacturer after Cvalim, to US-based Superior Telecom for NIS 90m.

"The American cable companies want to expand their activities by mergers and acquisitions," a source close to the deal said. "The activity of the local companies allows them to enter new areas."

Cvalim, which sold only the manufacturing activity, will continue to hold the buildings which will be rented to Cvalim Industries (EWC), the local subsidiary of Cable Systems, for an annual \$670,000 during the first five years and \$1 million in the subsequent five years.

The source said that the company plans to use the money for other investments, which he declined to specify.

The deal is expected to be completed by June 30. Cvalim said it expects to take a capital after-tax loss of NIS 15m.

Cvalim produces and markets cables for the telecommunications, power and electronics companies. The company reported earlier this month net income fell 11.7% to NIS 15.1m., from NIS 17.1m. a year earlier. Net sales decreased 7.8% to NIS 385.5m.

Cable Systems will continue to manufacture in Israel and agreed to retain the 500 local employees.

Students protest corruption

An Indonesian university student performs a mock hanging to depict the students' recommended punishment for corrupt officials during an anti-government protest in Jakarta.

(Reuters)

Check Point profit up 140% in 1st qtr.

By NINA GILBERT

Check Point Software Technologies Ltd. reported a 140 percent increase in first-quarter net income to \$15.5 million from \$6.4m. in the same period last year.

First-quarter revenues were up 125% to \$30.5m. from \$13.6m. However, revenues were up only 4% compared with the fourth quarter, causing the share price to drop as much as 18% when trading opened on the Nasdaq in New York yesterday.

Earlier this month, Check Point made its first acquisition, of MetalInfo of Seattle, in a deal worth \$27.5m.

The company also established an office for Middle Eastern regional sales in the first quarter.

Check Point, based in Ramat Gan, produces network security and traffic management solutions, including its Firewall-1 - which protects networks against Internet intrusions, and new traffic management product FloodGate-1.

Microsoft's executive vice president Steve Ballmer, who was on a three-day visit here this week, said the company has begun developing products that will compete with Check Point.

This week Check Point was named by Dun and Bradstreet as one of the best performers among Israeli companies for 1997, with the sharpest increase in exports at 160%. In 1997, Check Point's revenues rose 160 percent to \$82.9m. from \$31.8m. the previous year.

Net profit rose 164% to \$40.2m. from \$15m.

Stanley Works buys ZAG for \$117m.

By NINA GILBERT

The Stanley Works, the Connecticut-based maker of hardware store supplies, signed an agreement yesterday to buy 90 percent of ZAG for an estimated \$117 million in cash.

ZAG, the Rosh Ha'ayin-based maker of plastic products established in 1987, will operate as a subsidiary of Stanley and remain based here.

CEO and founder Zvi Yemini will hold the remaining 10% of the shares and continue in his position after the sale, as will the rest of the management team.

Some 30% of the company is publicly held via the Nasdaq, and the deal is subject to a shareholder vote.

As a part of the deal, the Ramat Gan-based Technoplast Industries will sell its entire 15.2% stake to Stanley, but its production agreement with ZAG will remain intact.

Since 1993, ZAG has been making and producing plastic storage products - including tool boxes, bulk storage containers, shelving

systems and parts organizers.

The products are sold through major home centers and mass merchant retailers in nearly 60 countries, including the US Home Depot chain.

ZAG reported revenues of \$63.6 million in 1997.

The Stanley Works, founded in 1843, had revenues of \$2.7 billion last year and announced a major restructuring and a new strategy that emphasizes product and brand development.

Japan releases plan to resolve bad loan problem

By NATHAN WESTBY and CHIAKI MOCHIZUKI

Japan's ruling party will propose the government form a panel to mediate disputes between banks and debtors to clean up the 77 trillion yen (\$592 billion) in bad loans held by Japanese banks.

Agreements reached through the panel would be binding and have the force of a court decision. Banks would benefit by being able to deduct losses from taxes, and debtors would gain by having debts forgiven.

"Other than people who think they're going to die, or who have given up, almost all debtors will want to take advantage of this plan," said Kozo Yamamoto, a

member of the Liberal Democratic Party committee that came up with the plan.

The mediation panel is the centerpiece of an LDP plan to get banks to dispose of bad loans, which are limiting lending to healthy companies and dragging on a moribund real estate market.

The proposal will be included in a package to boost the economy that the government will release today.

"This plan possesses all the tools needed to solve the bad loan problem," said Okiharu Yasuoka, chairman of the LDP panel.

The proposal also includes using postal savings and life insurance funds to invest in a yet-to-be-developed market for asset-backed securities. (Bloomberg)

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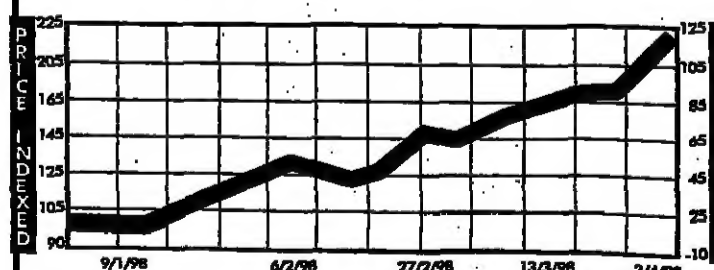
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66.679	+0.1575
53.875	+0.5125
51	+0.625
59.625	-1.3125
70.675	-0.5
67.8125	-0.1
1.0625	-0.0625
41	+0
42.125	+1
51.75	+1.25
65.875	+1.125
40.625	-1.125
51.0625	+1
28.875	-0.5625
56.625	-0.0625
83.1875	+0.125
28.5	-0.5
54.5	-0.5
58.625	-0.0625
70.5	-0.5375
81.125	-0.375
77.75	-1.5
91.75	-1.1875
83.4375	+1.125
64.4375	+0.75
112.75	+0.75
100.5	-1
78.125	-0.3125
29.75	-0.25
59.625	+0.125
71.625	+0.1875
22.0625	-1.375
33.125	-3.375
37.2575	-0.25
7.0625	+0.8125
51.625	+0.46875
34.5	-1.3125
35.9375	-0.875
33.375	-0.0625
91.675	-1.625
57.0625	-2.0625
25.5625	-0.125
42.5	-0.3125
64.9375	-1.25
81.175	-1.25
76.875	-2.8075
82.5625	-0.4375
75.375	-0.0625
51.75	-0.5625
6.625	-0.625
69	-1
130.875	-0.125
40.875	-0.5625
20.625	-2.1875
30.625	-1.125
34.5	-4.25
33.8125	-4.11875
70.825	-0.875
34.25	-1.25
25.0625	-0.0625
78.5625	+0.75
34.125	-1.875
29.125	-0.5
21.125	+0
54.5625	-0.5625
37.375	+0.25
32.25	+0.125
56.25	-1.0625
51.8125	-1.8875
164	+0.875
30.8875	+0.4375
15.975	-0.125
77.4	+0.9125
74.5888	-0.25
22.75	-0.375
80.5625	-0.0625
118	-0.5
30.0625	-0.5188
42.4375	-0.375
98.1875	-0.4375
30.9375	-0.0625
77.5625	-1.1875
34.25	-0.575
117.75	-0.3125
40.188	+0.3125
46.875	-0.25
8	-0.88
49.8125	+0
88.1188	-1.3125
25	-1.0625
14.3125	-0.1875
8.675	-0.3125
55.75	-0.5125

TASE ISSUES

10.0623	-1.3379
10.0623	-0.0026
10.0626	-0.0079
11.8778	-0.1076
11.8863	-0.126
15.8125	-0.9875
17.6878	-1.72
20.0	-2.5
21.8125	-3.6875
30.8125	-0.5
32.1875	-0.5
35.0	-0.0026
10.5625	-0.0026
45.675	-0.5125
72.875	-0.5125
91.5	-0.0026
100.25	-0.0026
94.5625	-0.6875
97.5	-0.0026
144.1875	-0.625
70.8437	-0.25
115.575	-1.5
60.75	-0.675
22.3125	-0.3125
30.4375	-0.375
88.4375	-1.625
48.5875	-0.8125
22.8625	-0.375
110.8125	-1.5625
48.8125	-0.125
77.25	-0.5
14.675	-0.375
67.125	-0.125
20.5	-1.1875
35.875	-0.5
53.25	-0.6875
20.25	-0.5
53.4375	-0.1875
56.4375	-1.3125
11.375	-1.25
20.5	-0.0026
-105.125	-1.75
13.125	-0
30.875	-0.25
84.825	-1.3125
56.25	-0.5875
25.5625	-0.375
139.0625	-0.3
22.625	-0.25
67.25	-0.25
100.5	-0.0026
109.8125	-1.5
71.125	-0.0026
30.125	-0.625
56.125	-0.5625
28.4375	-0.5625
18.1875	-0
37.3125	-0
37.8125	-0.875
83	-0.375
51.5	-1.1875
23.9625	-1.3125
84.75	-1.825
28.4375	-0.3125
31.4375	-0.5625
81.5625	-0.4375
75	-0.375
26	-0.625
58.5875	-0.0026
22.6875	-1.125
38.5625	-0.4375
70.875	-0.875
15.75	-0.3125
18.5	-1.875
40.1875	-0.625
28	-0.0026
43.5	-0.6875
26.675	-1.0625
5.375	-0.125
30.25	-0.1875
13.25	-0.4375
31	-0.5
57.5	-1.4375
56.75	-0.5625
44.875	-0.125
43.875	-0.125
40.875	-0.5
38	-0.5
71.875	-0.375
28.375	-0.375
70.125	-1.1875
28.5875	-0.5625
41.5	-0.8625
26.0625	-0.8125
58.5875	-0.375
33.125	-0.8125
51.9375	-1.1875
14.4375	-0.625
83.1125	-0.3125
44.0625	-0.3125
28.5875	-0.0026
42.875	-0.0026
85.875	-0.125
29.5625	-1.5
1.1875	-0.0026
30.275	-1.1875
58.5875	-0.5625
28.9375	-0.1875
23.3125	-0.3125
43.8875	-0.75
51	-1.125
14.5625	-0.0026
31.0625	-0.0026
31.6125	-1.375
45.5	-2.625
115	-2.625
68.0625	-0.1875
46.8125	-0.75
38.25	-0.25
37.875	-1.1875
20.25	-0.3125
62.0625	-0.0026

LAST CHANGE

Boston	10	0.1879
Boston	39,026	0.15
Boston	45,068	0.1675
Bright & Stern	104,236	0.22
Briggs & Stratton	1,516	0.1675
Briggs & Stratton	26,75	0.1675
Bright & Stern	108,063	0.1125
Bright & Stern	1,516	0.1675
Bright & Stern	1,516	0.1675
Bright & Stern	35,5	0.1675
Bright & Stern	1,516	0.1675
Bright & Stern	103,168	0.1675
Bright & Stern	47,25	0.0625
Bright & Stern	34,8126	0.25
Bright & Stern	25,126	0.25
Bright & Stern	0,825	0.25
Bright & Stern	53,6126	0.1375
Bright & Stern	37,0626	0.1375
Bright & Stern	0,5	0.5
Bright & Stern	35,5	0.6875
Bright & Stern	111,126	0.825

CS Electronics Ltd	4.25	+0.0525
Comm Software	0.53125	+0.03125
G Associates	3.75	+0.125

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Flamingo Cos Dis	18,629	-0.37
Florida Frog	96,275	-0.56
Fluor Corp	45,373	-0.42
Gen Line Inc	119,125	-0.35
Port Motor	35,775	-1.62
Fortune Brands	37,725	-0.75
Foster Wheeler	58	-0.81
Global Tech	11,0625	-0.31
Gateway 2000	1,94375	-0.36
GTE Corp	82,5625	-0.26
GTX Corp	60	-0.21
Gunnsell	69,5375	-1.82
Gap Inc Del	45,0625	-0.29
Gap Inc	60	-0.68
GenCorp	29,8375	-0.25
Genl Int'l Invest	29,8375	-0.12
Gen Dynamics	42,8675	-0.27
Gen Electric	84,3375	-0.75
Genl Motors	63,125	-1.21
Gen Motors	63,125	-1.56
Gen Mtron H	53,125	-0.12

PAI	55.5	+0
S.E.A. Multimedia	4.5	+3
SOURCE: SAP COMSTOCK (DATE 24-APR-98)		

Gen Public Ut	40,375	-0.81
Gen Insurance	3,265	+0.00
Gen Signal	45	+0.56
Gen DataComm	4,9375	+0.02
Genetics Parts	35,8125	+0.69
Georgia Pac	71,875	-0.06
Germany Fund	16,925	-0.18
Gulfco	14,775	-0.75
Gulfco	14,775	-0.18
Glaxo (ADR)	50	-0.81
Goldman W Fl	169,375	-1.26
Goodrich (P)	33,5375	-0.55
Goodrich (W)	71,1875	-0.58
Grace (WFL)	20,4375	-0.68
Granger (WFL)	10,188	-1.31
Graco (P)	30,1375	-0.25
Graco (W)	30,1375	-0.25
Griff Capital Mgmt	50	+0.00
Griff Capital Pk	50	+0.00
Healthbanc	52,9375	-0.57
Harris (AM)	23,8125	-0.37
Harris (AM)	23,8125	-0.37

Alma	51.3125	+0.75
AMP Inc	40	-0.5825

Harmon	36,987.95	-0.56
Hartman	29,875	-0.55
Hawkins	29,875	-0.55
Hawkins	51,595	-0.97
Hendon Corp	45,375	-0.88
Herrman	38,875	-0.16
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Helm (H)	55,375	+0.5
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Hercules	48,025	+0
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Hewlett Packard	38,875	+0.25
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Hinch Inc	15,375	+0.1
Hines	40,775	-0.12
Home Depot	70,25	-0.68
Honeywell	11,375	+0.27
Hopewell	34,375	+0.1
Hornell (Gow)	33,325	+0.08
Hornell (Gow)	13,375	+1.01
Houston Inds	29,437.5	-0.12
Humana	38,025	-1.76
IBM	117,575	+0.27
IBM Corp	38,875	-0.55
Inteco Tech	60,025	-0.25
INCO	18,025	-0.83
International Flavors	18,025	-0.71
Int'l Steel	88,225	+0.9
Intel Corp	8,725	-0.87
Int'l Paper	21,375	-0.25

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Furthermore, the data points to a 1% increase in the overall number of hours worked during the same period.

Diplomatic magic or sleight of hand?

Has British Prime Minister Tony Blair charmed Israel into bending its long-standing refusal to let the Europeans mediate talks with the Palestinians?
Herb Keinon reports

Flush from his triumphant brokerage of a framework peace agreement for Northern Ireland, British Prime Minister Tony Blair arrived in the Middle East this week. On a charmed roll, he appeared at first blush to have worked some minor diplomatic magic.

On the first day of Blair's Jerusalem visit, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said at a joint press conference that he was prepared to "go to any location, and possibly to London, to try and advance the process."

This immediately gave way to talk of a London summit, with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat, Netanyahu and Blair.

The magic was not in putting together an Arafat-Netanyahu parley, that trick has been done before, but rather in getting the Israelis to agree to accept some diplomatic input from the European Union.

The same Europe had infuriated Israel last year when it drafted the Luxembourg Declaration that committed Europe to "enhancing its support to Palestinian institutions in east Jerusalem."

The same Europe had adopted the Venice Declaration in 1980, calling for self-determination for the Palestinians - a euphemism for statehood - and active PLO participation in peace negotiations. Both ideas were deemed downright anti-Israel by Jerusalem at the time.

The same Europeans have also traditionally been viewed by Jerusalem as too biased and pro-Palestinian to deserve any real role in the peace process.

Alfred Tovias, an international relations professor and deputy director of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Helmut Kohl Institute for European Relations, says that Europe's engagement in the Middle East in 1998 is far different than in 1980.

"Eighteen years ago, at the time of the Venice Declaration, the Europeans had no leverage with the Palestinians, and only minor leverage with Israel," Tovias says. By leverage, he means influence stemming from economic assistance.

"The ones who had leverage with the Palestinians were the Saudis and the Russians," he says. Today, Tovias says, "the Europeans have taken the place of the Saudis and Russians. My thesis is that Israel can make some capital of this."

According to EU figures, Europe has provided some \$1.8 billion of aid to the Palestinians since 1993, by far the largest contribution in the world.

Although Tovias says he has not seen any willingness by Israel to

let the EU get involved in political questions, "there might be a slow erosion in this regard."

"What Israel understands better now is that in one respect the political involvement of the EU can be useful to Israel, since the Union can apply pressure on the Palestinians. Whereas the US has a lot of leverage with Israel, the EU now has a lot of leverage with the Palestinians," he continues.

Tovias says that while blocking European involvement in peace talks has had the positive aspect of preventing pressure on Israel from the EU, "you also don't get pressure on the Palestinians either. When you realize that the Europeans are essentially financing the Palestinian Police, you

Tovias: "What Israel understands better now is that in one respect the political involvement of the EU can be useful to Israel, since the Union can apply pressure on the Palestinians."

realize they may have a lot of leverage with the other side, and begin to think that their involvement can be used for your own purposes."

Still, the summit planned for May 4 in London seems a long way from shunting the Americans aside and replacing US envoy Dennis Ross with Blair.

The dust has settled since Blair's visit on Sunday, and the four-way summit initially discussed is planned as separate meetings between Blair and Netanyahu, and Blair and Arafat, with Blair stepping in to say a cordial "hello."

Jacques Neriah, a former diplomatic advisor to late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, maintains that what happened this week with Blair is no indication at all that Israel has softened its stand toward the Europeans.

"I think it is all part of a gimmick to buy time," Neriah says. "Another conference, another meeting. More activity, but no action."

"Everyone realizes that nothing will move without the Americans, and no one will dare try to replace the Americans," he says.

Besides, adds Neriah, who heads the Israel Humanitarian

Foundation which distributes two to three million dollars annually to various charitable causes, "although the Europeans may have leverage with the Palestinians, they have limited ability to coerce Israel into doing anything."

That may be true, argues Tovias, but together the US and the Europeans may make an effective team, with the US able to apply pressure on Israel, and the EU able to turn some screws on the Palestinians.

Moshe Raviv, the ambassador to Britain from 1993 to 1997, warns against placing too much emphasis on the site of the Albright-Arafat, Albright-Netanyahu meetings scheduled for May 4 in London. He says this should in no way be construed as a change in Israel's perception of a European role.

"This is not a turning point," Raviv says. "The meetings will only be significant if they produce results - unless this happens, it will just be another meeting. It does not in any way represent a change in Israeli attitudes toward Europe, but is just a matter of convenience."

Raviv says that the Palestinians, who see themselves as the weaker partner in negotiations, are always looking for third partners to assist them.

"But experience must have taught them that the best results are when we sit down face to face - as in Oslo. The major breakthroughs have been made directly between Israelis and Palestinians," Raviv says.

Yehuda Blum, the ambassador to the UN from 1978 to 1984, says that the US may be using the possibility of greater European involvement as a threat to dangle over Israel's head.

"They could be using the Europeans as a stick," Blum says, saying to us, "If you don't get along with our proposals, there are others out there waiting to have a go - try your luck with them."

Blum says it is not clear from what transpired in Jerusalem and Gaza this week just how active the EU will be in the London talks.

"There were mixed signals," Blum says. "Blair said that the Americans are behind the meetings in London, and he is only the host."

"That means he is putting forth the facilities, Britain's good offices."

"I think that is more a gesture to the Americans, than to us. He does not want to get in any kind of confrontation with the US."

The Palestinians, Blum agrees, want to see increased EU involvement out of a belief that the Europeans would put more pressure on Israel than the Americans



British Prime Minister Tony Blair in Israel this week. He's not about to replace US envoy Dennis Ross as a mediator. (AP)

would. But, he said, nobody should delude themselves into believing that hosting a meeting is the same as active engagement in the process.

"[Cabinet secretary Dan] Naveh made clear that London is only a meeting place, and does not mean that the European committee is involved. I have the feeling that he was sent to clarify after Netanyahu's remarks at the press conference that the Europeans are not going to be involved like the Americans, and are not going to be the fourth leg to the chair. It really does not make a difference if they meet in London,

Copenhagen or elsewhere. The site is not significant," Blum says.

Despite the success Blair had in Ireland, Blum doesn't think the British leader, whose six month term as head of the 15-nation EU ends in June, is dying to get involved here.

"There are those in Europe who want to get involved, primarily the French and the Spanish. But I don't get the impression that Blair wants to get that actively involved, not because he is afraid of the conflict, but because of the Anglo-American friendship - he does

not want to give the Americans the impression that he is acting as a competitor," Blum says.

"It seems to me what he is trying to do is balance between the

Americans - who don't want too much European involvement - and other Europeans, like the French, who want to see a more active role."

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Olmert looks west

Like many of Mevasseret Zion's 20,000 residents, Yossi Sharvit, who has lived in this Jerusalem suburb for all of his 37 years, gets pretty emotional over Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert's plan to effectively annex his hometown.

"Olmert is trying to occupy us by force. Not with tanks, not with troops, but by force nevertheless," said Sharvit. "We will do everything in our power, within the boundaries of the law, to stop him."

Sharvit was speaking during a Wednesday night meeting at Mevasseret's town hall, where some 30 anti-annexation activists, backed by council head Eli Mouyal, decided to shut down the town's public institutions and services on Sunday in protest.

"This is a beautiful town, with lots of greenery, with a country atmosphere. Olmert wants to turn it into a crowded city, just like Jerusalem - to build and build and build some more. We want Mevasseret and [other suburbs west of the capital like] Motza and Tsur Hadassah and Abu Ghosh and Telshe Stone, and then he'll keep going all the way to Lod," declared Sharvit.

In the view of Jerusalem city spokesman Haggai Elias, this kind of statement is simple "demonstratory." So are declarations

Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert plans to annex outlying communities. He has few defenders and some high-powered opponents. Larry Derfner reports

about the suburban residents' fears that Olmert plans to crank up their property taxes to make up for all the taxes he doesn't collect from Jerusalem's haredim and Arabs. Equally false are charges that Olmert is looking for a convenient new place to dump the city's garbage, the spokesman maintained.

"The mayor has said he will not raise the property taxes in Mevasseret or any other suburb, and that he is not interested in using their land as a garbage dump," Elias said.

What Olmert does want, Elias said, is the authority to expand the capital westward - to build new housing, industry and infrastructure - without having to fight Mevasseret and the other suburbs that want to keep Jerusalem a safe distance away.

"Our industrial parks are full up. For more than a year we've been trying to decide on building a new

industrial park in conjunction with Mevasseret Zion, but they keep objecting to every detail and nothing has moved," Elias said. "This way, instead of having a lot of bosses who argue with each other, there will be one boss, and that will be Ehud Olmert, together with the Interior Ministry and the Planning and Building Committee."

This is exactly what the folks in Mevasseret and its environs are afraid of.

Elias insists their fears are groundless. "The new system will be good for the [suburban] residents," he said. Once planning authority devolves from the local authorities to Jerusalem, which would act as the "umbrella municipality" in the region, many town planners, engineers and clerks would become redundant, and their dismissal would save the suburban taxpayers millions of shekels.

"Olmert has promised that all

the savings will go to the local authorities, not to Jerusalem," the spokesman added.

THE PLAN TO ANNEX the capital's western suburbs was first proposed by the Interior Ministry in 1985, Elias said. Olmert recently raised the proposal anew and said he wanted the Knesset to pass it into law by Independence Day. Fierce local opposition, however, slowed down the plan.

While Prime Minister Netanyahu, Interior Minister Eli Shalev and Olmert discussed the plan on Tuesday, some 300 suburban residents protested outside the PM's Office. At one point some of them tried, unsuccessfully, to block the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway.

Among the Mevasseret residents active in the anti-annexation campaign are Channel 2 director-general Nahman Shai and former General Security Services head Carmi Gilon. Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi, who also lives in Mevasseret, and Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, who lives in Motza, reportedly oppose the idea as well.

Israel Kinche, a leading authority on Jerusalem planning, said that while it's too soon to judge a proposal that is not final, he doesn't like the way it's being imposed on the suburbs.



Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert: Trying to build new housing and industry - or cover the city's deficit? (Photos: Brian Heidler)

"I don't think that in the 20th century you can force people, many of whom left the city, to become part of it again," said Kinche, chief researcher for the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies. "Regional coordination on such issues as roads and sewage is a good thing, but there are other ways to do it without taking away the local authorities' independence."

Former Labor Party minister Shimon Shetret, who is running for mayor on the One Jerusalem ticket in the November election, agrees. "You cannot do such a thing unilaterally," he said. "It goes against the democratic spirit and the Israeli political tradition of taking the public's views into consideration - especially in a case like this, where you have many residents of Mevasseret Zion and Tsur Hadassah who moved out of Jerusalem."

Shetret said the capital had no more right to annex its western suburbs than Tel Aviv had to annex Ramat Gan and its other adjacent cities. (Such a plan was "announced" by Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo as an April Fool's Day gag.)

Elias said there was no comparison between the two. Ramat Gan, Bat Yam, Herzliya and other Tel Aviv neighbors "are large cities unto themselves," he said, while Jerusalem's suburbs are relatively tiny. Tsur Hadassah and Motza,

for instance, have only hundreds of residents each.

Deciding which suburbs should be independent and which should be part of the city was a fairly arbitrary matter, he continued. "Mevasseret Zion is no further away from Jerusalem than Pisgat Ze'ev, yet Pisgat Ze'ev is part of Jerusalem. And why should Mevasseret be independent but not Gilo, which has 45,000 residents."

"Mevasseret only became a local authority because of a decision by the Interior Ministry: why shouldn't the ministry have the right to change that decision?" Elias insisted.

Shetret, however, contended that the whole idea is designed to "allow Olmert to cover the city's deficit, which has ballooned under his administration, by reaching into the pockets of residents in Mevasseret and Tsur Hadassah." He warned that local property taxes in these and other affected suburbs could "double or even triple" if the annexation goes through.

Olmert needs to find new sources of city income, Shetret maintained, "because he bought the population sector which put him in power - the haredim - with billions of shekels." The money came in property tax reductions and deferments, and land allocations for religious institutions which pay no property tax, Shetret said.

To this, Elias repeated that

Olmert has pledged not to raise any suburb's taxes, and he noted that Mevasseret Zion's tax revenues were only a fraction of Jerusalem's, so there wasn't much money to cover in the first place.

The city's deficit has not grown during Olmert's regime, added Elias, who put Shetret's charges down to "electioneering."

Yet a highly-respected planning expert (who didn't want his name published) said suburbanites west of Jerusalem had good reason to fear the annexation plan - not necessarily because it would lead to higher taxes, but because Jerusalem was an object lesson in how a city should not be run.

"The quality of life here deteriorates year by year. The streets are in terrible condition, the parks are not kept up. Jerusalem gets more crowded all the time; the green spaces are being eaten up by concrete. There are plans to build dozens of buildings in the city of up to 50 and 60 stories. Where is the transportation to support all this? The current plans for Jerusalem are going to prove a catastrophe for generations, and now the city is going to put its hands on even more land!" the expert asked.

No thank you, says Yossi Sharvit. "If I wanted to live in Jerusalem, I would have moved to Jerusalem," he said. "And if Olmert wants to build, let him build on Har Homa and leave us alone."



'Annexation of Mevasseret is political violence.' Demonstrators outside the Prime Minister's Office protest Olmert's plan.

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CRUCIAL

Continued from Page 1

The official refused to discuss what consequences might follow continued disagreement over fulfilling the US's four-part agenda: progressing to final-status talks; ceasing provocative acts; resolving Palestinian demands for a larger Israeli redeployment; and improving the PA's level of security cooperation with Israel.

He would not comment, for example, on speculation that the US is weighing the possibility of removing itself as a mediator.

"If we're not successful in moving ahead, we'll have to look at what we can do," he acknowledged, adding that the US is hoping that the next 10 days yield dramatic changes in the year-long freeze.

He added that the US is encouraged by Arafat's crackdown on Hamas and wishes that Israel were more encouraging toward Arafat for the progress he has made in fighting terrorism.

"They're in a full-blown campaign against Hamas as an institution. That's very important," the official said. "It needs to be sustained... Arafat is doing the right thing. I can add - 'at last' - but he's doing the right thing."

Indyk is to remain in the region to link up with Vice President Al Gore, who is to fly to Israel late next week to participate in the 50th anniversary celebrations.

In Gaza, Arafat met last night with cabinet members to discuss the Ross visit. A senior PA official warned Israel against trying to stop the declaration of Palestinian statehood.

Also discussed were the visit of British Prime Minister Tony Blair and the London meeting with Albright.

Arafat plans to fly to Germany today for a two-day visit, during which he will meet with Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel.

PA Secretary-General Tayeb Abdul Rahim said neither peace nor stability would come to the region unless the Palestinians obtain statehood with Jerusalem as their capital. Addressing a graduation ceremony of security officers in Gaza, Abdul Rahim reiterated that statehood would be declared in another year.

He warned Israel against trying to stop the Palestinians.

"If they enter our lands, they will not leave alive," he said. "This is our decision. The Israeli side should understand that we are determined to bring about our stage next year on all our Palestinian lands according to the international laws."

Arafat aide Nabil Abu Rudeineh warned that if the London summit fails, the Arab countries would convene a summit and take a united position against Israel.

Jay Bushinsky, Steve Rodan and Mohammed Najib contributed to this report.

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مكتبة القدس

Lost cause?

A British delegation, including actress Susannah York, came to Israel this week to push for Mordechai Vanunu's early release. Allison Kaplan Sommer examines whether the publicity will help or hinder his chances for parole

British actress Susannah York, who has campaigned relentlessly in recent years on behalf of nuclear spy Mordechai Vanunu, does not harbor any illusions that her cause is popular with the Israeli public. This became clear to her four years ago, when she was here to lobby for Vanunu's early release from prison, and a young man spat in her face on the street and called her "a traitor-lover."

The incident followed her appearance on the combative television program *Popolitica* during which, she recalls, "I was so continuously shouted at that I couldn't get a word in edgewise."

Yet, in the time that has elapsed between that visit and her current stay in Israel this week, lobbying on the eve of Vanunu's parole hearing, she says she perceives a softening in the feelings of Israelis towards Vanunu.

The former technician at the Dimona nuclear plant has served 12 years of his 18-year prison term for selling Israel's nuclear secrets to London's *Sunday Times* in 1986. Nearly all of it has been in solitary confinement.

This week, "people have praised me for daring to mention Vanunu's name and a young soldier even told me that he wished the Israeli public was more informed about the case," says York.

She was also pleased to find that hundreds of Israelis agreed to sign a petition calling for clemency for Vanunu, and several demonstrated for his early release on Wednesday in front of Shikma Prison where the parole hearing was taking place. (After sitting for nearly five hours, the parole board failed to reach a decision and put off further hearings until next month.)

"Four years ago none of this would have happened," she says. York, active in the International

Campaign to Free Mordechai Vanunu, came here accompanied by the joint vice-chairmen of the Human Rights Committee of the British Parliament, Labor MP Jeremy Corbyn and Lord Avebury. They brought a petition signed by 700 international figures to Beit Hanassi, asking President Ezer Weizman to pardon Vanunu, and traveled to the prison where he is being held in an unsuccessful attempt to meet with him.

The intent of the visit was "to bring attention to his plight and, of course, to persuade the authorities [to consider his] release from prison," said York.

"The timing is excellent, what with Mordechai's upcoming parole review coinciding with the 50th anniversary celebrations, and the rather extraordinary circumstances that British Prime Minister Tony Blair came here this week as well. We wrote to Tony Blair asking him to speak to Netanyahu about Vanunu but we are unsure if he was able to do so." (During his visit, Blair said he had not raised the issue.)

York believes that all British, including Blair, bear "some sense of responsibility for his future and his plight, since the case involved the *Sunday Times*."

THE GROUP that came to Israel represents just a fraction of the international support for Vanunu; there are chapters of the free Vanunu campaign in several countries, and he has become a hero in anti-nuclear circles.

Ironically, it is precisely the elements that have made Vanunu a martyr abroad, that are likely to lead the parole board to deny his early release.

Vanunu regrets none of his actions, reiterating that position in a *Sunday Times* interview this week, in which he says he "would do it all over again."



British actress Susannah York tries unsuccessfully to get into Shikma Prison where Vanunu is being held.

Justice Ministry officials told the parole board on Wednesday that the defense establishment believes Vanunu still knows secrets that could damage Israel's security if revealed.

This, combined with the indication that he is still strongly committed to his cause - and would presumably, continue to make what he knows public - makes the chances of his parole appear slim.

Even Vanunu's own attorney, Avigdor Feldman, is quite pessimistic about his chances for parole. Feldman argues strenuously that Vanunu does not possess any information whose revelation could hurt state security. He admits, however, that "it might help his case if he did regret his actions, but he does not - and he is not going to lie about it."

Feldman certainly did not help Vanunu's case that answers to the questions posed by the *Sunday*

Times were smuggled out of Vanunu's prison cell. Vanunu could be punished by having prison privileges like visits and phone calls suspended and, at worst, a return to solitary confinement.

"Listen, the publicity can only have a positive effect. The state is so determined not to let him go, that no outside influence could possibly harm his case," says Vanunu's attorney.

"True, it hasn't done much so far, but I hope over time there will be a change."

York, however, believes that pressure by the international human rights community was instrumental in helping to improve Vanunu's prison conditions; specifically, the easing of his con-

ditions in solitary confinement and current ability to mix with other prisoners, a change that occurred this year.

"I feel that the State of Israel acted with a great lack of humanity in converting the sentence of 18 years imprisonment to solitary confinement," York says. "Solitary is the cruelest form of psychological torture, and to face 12 years of it is dangerous for one's mental health."

Vanunu, York maintains, is a prisoner of conscience.

"Basically, he stands by his actions. He didn't want to be a hero, he didn't want to have to speak out or be in this position. He had to, but he didn't do it for any gain for himself; he did it for his country," she says.

"Listen, there is no disputing the fact that he broke state law and his vow of secrecy. But when he made the vow, he understood that the program was a civil program; only

afterwards he found out it was for military objectives, and realized the amount of warheads we were talking about."

"It was not an immediate response, but a slow dawning of the fact that people had a right to know what was being done in their name. He couldn't stand up and say within Israel itself 'Do you know what the situation is? Do you know we would have more than 200 warheads?'"

"It was a case of conscience. Mordechai knew that the moral imperative of letting people know was even greater than breaking state law."

Despite the fact that she has found herself at odds with the authorities and much of the public, York rejects the charge that she is "anti-Israel."

"All my visits here until now have been so political," she says. "I would love to come back someday as a tourist."

York, active in the International Campaign to Free Mordechai Vanunu, came here accompanied by the joint vice-chairmen of the Human Rights Committee of the British Parliament, Labor MP Jeremy Corbyn and Lord Avebury. They brought a petition signed by 700 international figures to Beit Hanassi, asking President Ezer Weizman to pardon Vanunu, and traveled to the prison where he is being held in an unsuccessful attempt to meet with him.

"The publicity can only have a positive effect. The state is so determined not to let him go that no outside influence could possibly harm his case"

- lawyer Avigdor Feldman

The importance of being Ernest

The British chapter of the International Campaign to Free Mordechai Vanunu mirrors its counterparts in dozens of countries around the world. Its activists are a small and disparate collection of politically charged clergymen, maverick politicians and celebrities in search of a cause, plus a sprinkling of doctrinaire socialists, radical environmentalists and anti-nuclear activists.

There is no membership; about 3,500 are on the mailing list. They come from a long tradition of British support for the lame and the halt, the underdog and the persecuted, and their individual motivation is as diverse as the causes they represent.

Some are driven by humanitarian concern for what they perceive to be a brave individual who is desperately seeking to avoid a nuclear holocaust; others use the campaign to gain a free ride for their own related causes; still others use it as a platform from which to vent their anti-Israel sentiments.

Whatever the reason, it is safe to assume that, Vanunu or no Vanunu, none of those who periodically demonstrate at the Israeli Embassy, sign petitions, stand in vigils or participate in delegations are planning to attend any of the functions in London to celebrate Israel's 50th anniversary.

For them, Israel is the unalloyed villain, while Vanunu is the recast Mandela, the reinvented Sharansky, a saintly and heroic idealist who took on the brutal apparatus of an oppressive regime armed only with the shield of principles and courage.

WELL, PERHAPS not Sharansky. Ernest Rodker, a furniture manufacturer and full-time voluntary coordinator of the British campaign to free Vanunu, says he felt passionately about the incarcerated Mandela, but he falls silent when Sharansky's name is raised. Pressed, he loses his composure.

"Well," he says, sulkily, "you can't support everything."

Rodker is Jewish. He has, he says, made some furniture for "Jewish synagogues," but he notes, more in sorrow than in anger: "There are times when you must tread on people's toes."

Such as Saturday mornings, when the campaign holds a regular vigil near the Israeli Embassy and passing Israeli tourists stop to gape.

Rodker, who was drafted into the campaign by Vanunu's brother Meir in 1991, affects an attitude of hurt when he describes the reac-

Who's behind the British movement to free Vanunu? Douglas Davis meets Jewish furniture manufacturer Ernest Rodker



Mordechai Vanunu

(Elihu Harari)

tion of the curious Israelis to the discovery that some members of his group are Jewish. The Israelis, he says, call them "Jew-haters."

But that is as far from the truth as suggestions that they are also Israel-haters, he insists. "I am a supporter of Middle East peace and a critic of Israel," he declares.

So how does a man who pours huge quantities of his time, energy, resources and passion into manning the Free Vanunu office in London, fill his day?

He sends out pamphlets and information sheets, writes letters to parliamentarians seeking political support, letters to others seeking financial support, and helps organize Free Vanunu groups around the country.

And what sort of activities does he encourage them to organize?

He encourages them, he says, to raise money, distribute his information, run religious ceremonies to mark Vanunu's conversion to Christianity, write to Vanunu, write to the Israeli Embassy, write

to members of parliament, organize vigils and arrange boycotts of Israeli goods...

What have boycotts of Israeli goods to do with Vanunu?

"No, no," Rodker corrects himself. "I shouldn't have said that. I shouldn't have said we encourage pickets against Israeli goods."

Then recovering, he adds the caveat: "Of course, we can't control what the groups do."

So does he condone action against Israel's commercial interests? A sullen silence. Does he condemn it? More silence.

Unlike Mandela and Sharansky, who did indeed wage moral campaigns against brutal tyrannies - in the near certainty that they would ultimately have to pay a terrible price - there is little about the Vanunu affair that seems to bear close moral scrutiny.

Sacked from his job at the Dimona nuclear facility, Vanunu left his country - and his family and his religion - betrayed nuclear secrets, and then insisted that he

had acted in everyone's best interests.

Yet Vanunu support groups now exist in dozens of countries, - from the United States and Russia through Nigeria, India, Taiwan, Australia and New Zealand.

WHAT MAKES the British group, of all the many groups scattered throughout the world, particularly active and prominent?

Firstly, London's *Sunday Times*, which published Vanunu's 1986 revelations that ultimately led to his abduction to Israel, clearly feels a residual responsibility.

The paper had no knowledge of Vanunu's supposedly chance meeting with "Cindy" in Leicester Square or his decision to accept her invitation to a weekend of rest-and-recreation at her flat in Rome, but it regularly finds reasons to resurrect the story of his plight.

Secondly, the British campaign has attracted a small group of high-profile personalities whose activities naturally attract media attention - actresses Susannah York and Julie Christie, playwright Harold Pinter and former priest Bruce Kent, became a cause celebre when he exchanged the church for a wife and a life of devotion to nuclear disarmament.

Less influential are the clutch of political figures who have attached themselves to the cause. They tend to occupy positions on the fringes of mainstream politics and, while some are well known, they are famous for being mavericks and are taken seriously only on the outer limits of the political margins.

Other factors that contribute to the British involvement are the geographic proximity of Israel, the coterie (and affluence) of its high-profile supporters - and, perhaps, the sheer frisson of excitement at the prospect of "confronting Israel" and "saving Mordechai."

There can be no doubt about Rodker's dedication, persistence and obsessiveness.

"I really feel it and live it and put everything into it," he says, anxious to dispel any doubts about his commitment to the cause.

But if Vanunu is pinning his hopes for an early release on the efforts of his British campaign coordinator, he may well be disappointed: Rodker is not about to open any cell doors anywhere.

After just an hour of conversation, there is an unmistakable sense that if anyone is in need of liberation, it is Rodker himself.

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A mysterious death?

The official statement said she died in Santa Barbara, Calif. But the coroner's office received no death certificate for Linda McCartney, raising questions about where she died and how.

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. — The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department has begun an investigation into conflicting accounts about where Linda McCartney, the wife of former Beatle Paul McCartney, died.

Sgt. Jim Peterson, a spokesman for the sheriff's office, said Santa Barbara officials opened their inquiry after the coroner's office received no death certificate for McCartney, who, according to her family, died last Friday of breast cancer, at the age of 56.

Nor was there authorization from the county for her remains to be cremated, as is required, he said.

"We don't know that she died," Peterson said Wednesday. "We don't know where she died, and we don't know when she died."

Peterson said it was premature to speculate on whether there may have been anything suspicious about the death, saying the department's investigation might simply reveal a paperwork snafu.

Officials in Tucson, Ariz., said they could not confirm reports suggesting that Linda McCartney may have died there at a family estate.

The McCartney family had issued statements saying that Linda McCartney died in Santa Barbara last Friday and was subsequently cremated. The location of her death was reported in obituaries published around the world.

Paul McCartney's spokesman, Geoff Baker, was quick to dismiss the suggestion that anyone may have assisted Linda McCartney's death after a years-long battle with cancer.

"Any suggestion that her death was assisted is complete and absolute rubbish, total nonsense," Baker said.

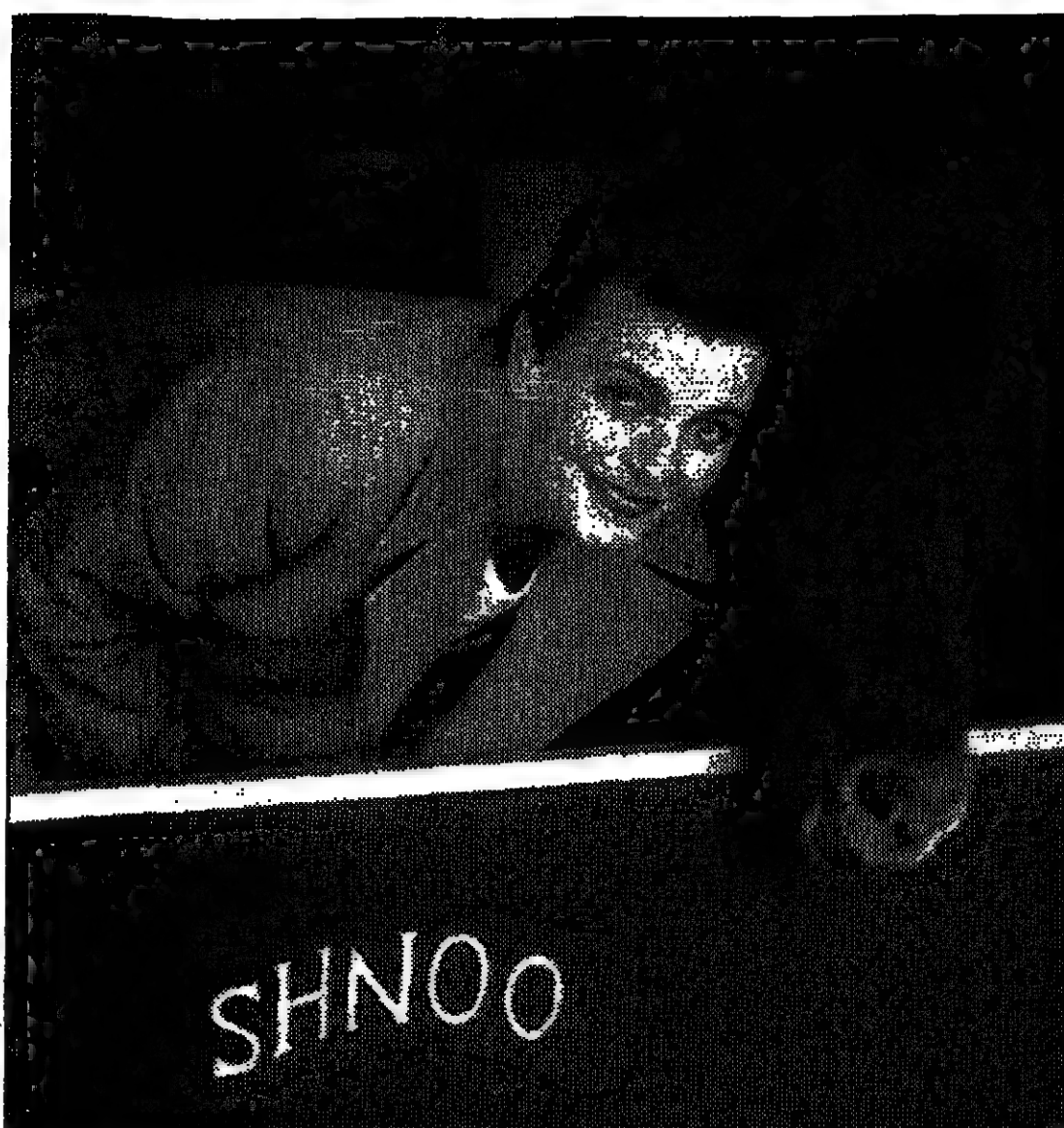
A statement from McCartney himself in England also discounted that suggestion, saying his wife's doctor could confirm that she died naturally.

Dr. Larry Norton, Linda McCartney's oncologist, has said that she died of natural causes.

"She died of natural causes of metastatic breast cancer," said a statement issued by Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York, where Norton practices.

But Paul McCartney's statement appeared to create more confusion about the question of where the former photographer had died.

"When Linda died last Friday



One of the last pictures taken of Linda McCartney: 'We don't know how well she felt when she went horseback riding [two days before she died],' Dr. Linnea Chap, a UCLA oncologist said. 'In all likelihood she was feeling quite weak and may have simply wanted to go ride one last time.' (AP)

with her family around her, it was in a place that was private to her and her family," it said.

According to Baker, Santa Barbara was named as the place of death for the sake of the family.

"In an effort to allow the family time to get back to England in peace and in private it was stated

that she had died in Santa Barbara," Baker said.

Linda McCartney attended the University of Arizona in the mid-1960s. The McCartneys bought a 600-dunam ranch east of Tucson, near Redington Pass, in 1979, and were known to use it with some frequency as a low-profile

getaway.

People magazine reported on its Internet Web site Wednesday that Linda McCartney had died at the Tucson ranch.

Officials in Pima County in Arizona refused to help unravel the mystery, saying that state confidentiality laws prevented them

from saying whether a death certificate for Linda McCartney had been filed in the county.

"We can't disclose that," David Dingeldine, chief of the Pima County Attorney's Office civil division, said. "That's final until somebody figures out there's some sort of hanky-panky going on in Pima County and presents some kind of evidence to that effect."

Linda McCartney reportedly died of breast cancer that had spread to her liver. A woman in the final stage of that disease is typically very lethargic and fatigued, possibly confused or in a coma-like state, said Dr. Linnea Chap, an oncologist at UCLA's Jonsson Cancer Center.

Such deep lethargy, brought on by the liver's inability to process natural toxins, runs counter to accounts of McCartney's final days.

She reportedly went horseback riding two days before she died.

Before her death, Linda McCartney had spent two weeks with her husband at the home of a friend in the wooded enclave of Hope Ranch overlooking the Pacific Ocean, the Santa Barbara News-Press reported Tuesday.

"The way it has been portrayed probably is a bit over-optimistic given how she probably felt a few days before her death," said Chap, who emphasized that she was not familiar with the details of McCartney's medical condition.

"We don't know how well she felt when she went horseback riding," Chap said. "In all likelihood she was feeling quite weak and may have simply wanted to go ride one last time."

For the past three decades, Linda McCartney sought refuge in Santa Barbara from England's foggy cold, keeping up old friendships, walking along the beach and horseback riding with her husband and their four children, one from a previous marriage.

On Tuesday, hundreds of friends gathered there to pay tribute to her. "The people of Santa Barbara need to gather together and pay respects to someone we really felt was part of our family," said Beatles historian Martin Lewis.

The daughter of an entertainment lawyer, Linda Eastman was already acclaimed for her moody, gritty photographs when she married Paul McCartney in London in 1969. (Los Angeles Times, AP)

Dry Bones



GRAPEVINE

By GREER FAYCASHMAN



A Mimosina fest: Yael Givish belly dancing at a get-together that included Shimon Shetreet and Ahmed Tibi.

Chances are good that during US Vice-President Al Gore's lightning visit here on Independence Day he will pay tribute to American Colonel Mickey Marcus, who was accidentally killed on the outskirts of Jerusalem in 1948 and subsequently buried at West Point. The Mickey Marcus memorial at Kiryat Telshe Stone in the Jerusalem corridor is just outside the home of Rabbi Eliot Sherman, director of the nearby American Promenade in Israel project.

Sherman hopes to be able to steer Gore to the promenade site but even if he fails, he has the consolation of knowing that Newt Gingrich, US speaker of the house, will definitely visit the promenade when he comes here in May. Gingrich is one of the honorary members of the Joint Commission on the American Promenade in Israel. Upon completion, the promenade will consist of 50 tall marble monuments bearing the flags and official seals of the 50 states, ringed around the US-Israel Friendship Botanical Garden in Kiryat Telshe Stone.

WHEN Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai hosted US Secretary of Defense William Cohen at a gala dinner in the Knesset's Chagall Hall, it looked as if anyone who has ever been anybody in the top brass of the defense and security establishment was there. From Ephraim Halevy, the new head of the Mossad, to all the former living defense ministers (except President Ezer Weizman, who breakfasted with Cohen and Mordechai at the latter's home). But Shimon Peres, Ariel Sharon and Moshe Arens were on hand, as were former chiefs of staff such as Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan.

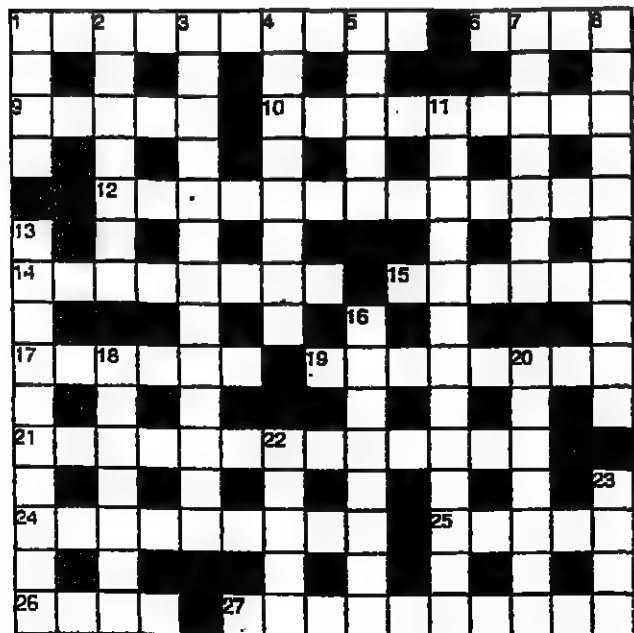
Cohen's tall, beautiful wife, Janet, stood out in her long, elegant dress because of her height, while Mordechai's wife, Kochava, "Kochi," in an advanced stage of pregnancy, was standing out for other reasons.

Dudu Fisher, who had returned from abroad earlier in the day, sang "The Prayer" from Les Miserables at Janet Cohen's request. Since she is also a fan of Chaim Topol's, Mordechai had invited him to the dinner. But Topol declined Fisher's invitation to sing "If I Were a Rich Man" and instead sang a cappella "Buddy Can You Spare a Dime?" Called back on stage by Mordechai, Fisher sang a medley of Fiddler on the Roof songs.

DARNA, the authentic Moroccan restaurant in Jerusalem, is a popular drop-in spot for Mimosina festivities. Moroccan-born Shimon Shetreet, who is running in the capital's mayoral elections, was in his natural habitat as he chatted with Darna's co-owner Ilan Siboni while they watched belly dancer Yael Givish. Also wearing a broad smile was Ahmed Tibi, the adviser to Palestinian Authority chairman Yasser Arafat.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- Man on motorway has scope for part of the planet (10)
 - Come up against an objection (4)
 - May get on as a rule (5)
 - A light covering (9)
 - It's what a ledger records presumably (6,2,5)
 - And not the navy line in London (8)
 - It's nonsense to dispose of his book, nothing less (6)
 - Cretan collected a heavenly drink (6)
 - More rugged rig Grace erected (8)
 - No lack of room for astronauts (6,2,5)
 - Circular wriggler? (9)
 - Amount to pay for a piano? (5)
 - Daughter ran off with stitch (4)
 - Dot has been abducted, I agree with you (5,5)
- DOWN**
- Horse is only partly shackled (4)
 - After half-time, I have the right fur (7)
 - Dedicated to calligraphy? (6-7)
 - Official stamp on building record (8)



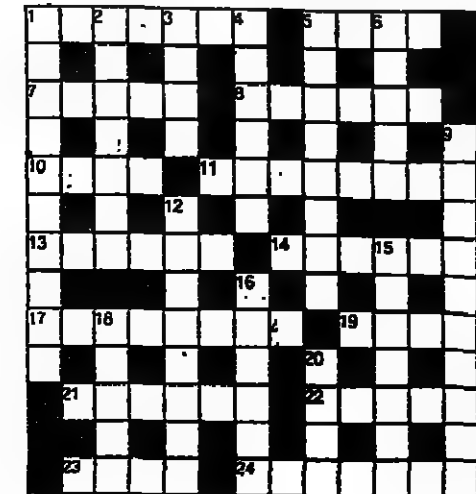
- Lover gets no addition to capital (5)
- Cupholder has a party about five—it's a boastful shout (7)
- Do not worry at that place repeatedly (5,5)
- Jack to obtain, after resting, an easy victim (7,6)
- Unimaginative one in Paris drew breath (10)
- An inexperienced fellow starting university? (8)
- Peg one who threatens to win at chess so it is said (7)
- Cold bag that might be drifting in the sea (7)
- Moulding rings about short boat (5)
- Silent god (4)

SOLUTIONS



Yesterday's Quick Solution
ACROSS: 1. Kait, 4. Picking, 5. Swanking, 9. Lob, 11. Rhythmic, 13. Miscon, 14. Doria, 15. Nudge, 17. Sep, 18. Abrain, 20. Hobart, 21. Couple, 24. Off, 25. Fallible, 26. Nodular, 27. Bunk.
DOWN: 2. Newly, 3. Tinned, 4. Fall, 5. Cogman, 6. Illidit, 7. Coboltopps, 10. French h.c., 12. Double, 13. Mimic, 16. Debutant, 19. Archil, 19. Mimosina, 22. Pater, 23. Birt.

QUICK CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- West African country (7)
 - Relax (4)
 - Peninsula near Swansea (5)
 - Caramel (6)
 - Love-god (4)
 - Afterbirth (8)
 - Touchy (6)
 - Scribble (6)
 - Survived (8)
 - Podium (4)
 - Weighing machine (6)
 - Jargon (5)
 - Cloth stainer (4)
 - From Lhasa (7)
- DOWN**
- Hint (10)
 - LOW town (7)
 - Bloodstained (4)
 - Tiny (6)
 - Effectiveness (8)
 - Beer-mug (6)
 - Piece of cutlery (10)
 - Exciting story (8)
 - Opposed (7)
 - One room flat (5-3)
 - Sticky (5)
 - Smooth-spoken (4)

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Sharon Area

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Sun, 10:30 a.m., 7:30 p.m. Tel. 02-582-
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a.m.

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9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

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Tel. 6919155-6.

ART GUIDE

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ART GUIDE

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Ra'anana-Kfar Sava: Superpharm, 3
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Haifa: Derech Hayam, 209 Derech
Hayam, 837-1472.

Kiryat Ono: Menahem Center, 29
Yehoshua, Kiryat Ono, 875-9441.
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No World Cup ticket? Try a Swiss phone

GENEVA (Reuters) - Soccer fans in the tranquil Swiss city of Geneva were profiting yesterday from yet another advantage of expatriate life here - easily obtainable World Cup tickets from the world's busiest reservation hotline.

Thanks to apparent Swiss disinterest in the event, expatriates contacted by Reuters said they had repeatedly got through to the Paris hotline swamped by some 20 million callers from around Europe.

"With 95 tickets amongst the five of us, we've given up trying. We've got all the tickets we need really," said one Scottish expatriate in this international city.

Another expatriate said his friends were ringing him from London offering to buy his tickets at three times the price.

He said it took him about half an hour to buy 16 tickets - the maximum allowed - and calculated that it could take over a week to sell the remaining 95,000 tickets at this rate.

Another fan reported getting through to the number, 33-1-4987 5354, twice from Geneva yesterday despite the overload on the second day of sales for the remaining first and second-round tickets.

British telecommunications expert Howard Williams was quoted as saying the chances of getting a ticket were one in two million as some 15 million calls were made from within France and five million from abroad

between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. on Wednesday.

There is less pressure on phone lines in Switzerland since the country is not in the World Cup - a strange twist given the problems faced by those countries most keen on the tickets.

British Telecom, for instance, has limited the number of calls that get through to France to prevent lines from crashing.

So the only way round the chaos is to travel to a country where demand for international lines will be low - Switzerland or Liechtenstein, for example - and telephone from there, or get friends in other foreign countries to ring up.

A spokesman for Swisscom, the state-owned Swiss telecoms company, could not say how many people were ringing the Paris hotline from Switzerland, but estimated that it would be low.

"The reason our lines are not loaded is that Swiss people cannot buy these tickets because we are not in the European Economic Area," said the spokesman, Jacques Bettex.

One of the soccer fans with tickets said: "We had to give French addresses, but the operator didn't seem bothered." Bettex declined to say how many calls a second the Swiss lines to France could cope with.

"Our (line) capacity to France cannot be disclosed because it is secret. It is a strategic information for us," he said.

French hotel prices to soar during World Cup

PARIS (Reuters) - Hotel prices in French cities hosting the World Cup soccer championships will soar by an average 41 percent during the final matches in June and July, a French consumer magazine said yesterday.

The biggest jump - 58% - will be in hotels near the Stade de France, the main stadium built in a depressed suburb northeast of Paris, and in Montpellier, according to a survey by the magazine Que Choisir.

The lowest price hikes - 30% - will be around Lille near the Belgian border and in Toulouse in southwestern France, it added. Prices in big cities

such as Paris, Lyon and Bordeaux will go up by about one-third.

"During its inquiry, Que Choisir caught a few hotels that really exaggerated," it said in a statement. "Some places boosted their rates by 209%, 147%, 120%, 77%..." The magazine of the Federal Consumers Union said it checked out 150 hotels, ranging from bargain lodgings to four-star establishments.

The average price for a double room without breakfast, normally 387 francs (\$64.37) a night, should rise to 547 francs (\$90.99), Que Choisir said.

French women indifferent to World Cup - poll

PARIS (Reuters) - Most French women are not interested in the upcoming World Cup finals, according to an opinion poll published yesterday.

The Ipsos poll commissioned by the Galleries Lafayette department stores said 70 percent of French women were indifferent to the tournament and only 21 percent were looking forward to it.

But 80 percent said they would be disappointed to see France go out early in the tournament.

Pessah fair a success thanks to people's generosity

Thank you one and all. Thank you for the wonderful response to our Pessah Handicrafts Fair that raised over NIS 40,000 for our three funds.

Thank you Bible Lands Museum for providing the hall. Thank you stall-holders and entertainers. And a special thank you to our readers and friends from Jerusalem and out of town, who made this year's fair such a joyous happening.

And a final thank you to Ophir Tours and Zionscours for each providing a free round-trip airline ticket to London as door prizes.

The one thing that we were not responsible for let us down. When we planned the fair back in December, rain and gales were uppermost in our mind. Little did we think that a heat wave would

FUNDS

be the problem. We're already thinking about next year's Pessah fair. Over the past years, we have alternated between the capital and the coast. So it looks as though in 1999, it will be the Sharon's turn.

Don't forget all three funds need your year-round support.

Send your checks today to: The Jerusalem Post Funds, P.O. Box 81, Jerusalem 91000.

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NIS 150 in the names of my beloved grandchildren, Ronen, Noam, Daniel, Rebecca and Matthew - Sonia Jacobson, Tel Aviv

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Sports Editors

Joe Hoffman & Ori Lewis

Eilat advances

By ELI GRONER

Better basketball doesn't always determine the outcome of deciding playoff games, but a bigger heart usually does.

A case in point is Hapoel Eilat, which outlasted, outmuscled and outplayed Rishon LeZion in Eilat last night to advance to the National Basketball League's Final Four for the second consecutive year.

Eilat 77, Rishon 62

Eilat proved that even on an off-night from Amir Katz (3 of 13 from three-point range), it had enough firepower to win its most important game of the year. Joe Dawson and Eddie Elisava tallied 18 points apiece and Meir Tapiro added 15, along with 10 rebounds, to pick up the slack and propel Eilat into the semifinals.

Sheer determination on the south-easterners' part proved to be pivotal. Eilat outrebounded Rishon 34-25, amassing 14 offensive boards along the way. In addition, the victors shot a perfect 17-17 from the charity stripe.

"When this team plays well, the sky's the limit," said Coach Moshe Weinkrantz. What should be of concern to Eilat's semifinal opponent, Maccabi Ra'anana, is that the south-easterners still haven't played to their potential in the postseason, and should only get better.

The other semifinal series will pit Maccabi Tel Aviv against Hapoel Jerusalem.

Both best-of-five series start on Sunday.

Kinder beats AEK for EuroLeague title

BARCELONA - Kinder Bologna brought Italy its first European Final Four title in 10 years, defeating AEK Athens 58-44 in last night's championship game behind 14 points from Antoine Rigaudeau and 13 from Predrag "Sasha" Danilovic.

Benetton Treviso defeated Partizan Belgrade in the third-place game 96-69.

The pre-tournament favorites - matching Tracer Milan's 1988 title - used depth, stifling defense and experience to beat AEK, which got too little offense from its two American cornerstones - Willie Anderson and Victor Alexander. Former San Antonio Spurs Anderson had only four - shut down on defense by Danilovic, just back from two seasons in the NBA with Miami and Dallas. Alexander, another former NBA player, added five and was out-played by Yugoslav counterpart Zoran Savic.

Jose Lasa led the losers with only seven points. Kinder's man-to-man defense was suffocating, and its sure ballhandling gave AEK little option but to struggle with a dreary half-court game and try out slugging Kinder inside.

Kinder, which was up 28-20 at the half, seemed comfortable until AEK closed to within four with 3:27 to play. But a key field goal by Danilovic - following his own missed shot - and a 3-pointer with 1:29 left by Savic to make it 52-42 sealed the victory.

Kinder coach Ettore Messina jumped from the bench, clenched his fists and looked to the heavens. He knew it was all over.

The EuroLeague title is Kinder's first, and a first for the highly respected Messina, who brought a rebuilt Italy a silver medal in last summer's European national championships.

AEK was the fifth consecutive Greek team to reach the Final Four, but it failed to match the titles won in the last two seasons by Greek clubs Olympiakos and Panathinaikos.

More bad news for AEK coach Yiannis Ioannides. He failed for the sixth time in six tries to win this title. He had been to the Final Four previously and lost twice with Olympiakos and three times with Aris Salonika.

Benetton Treviso was led by American Henry Williams with 24 points and Stefano Rusconi scored 16 in the 96-89 win over Partizan. Partizan's top scorer was Predrag Drobnjak with 22 and Dejan Tomasevic with 20.

For Benetton coach Zeljimir Obradovic, it was a third-place trophy to go with three championships and a fourth place.

Before the start of the final, police were called into action.

Twice as many officers were on duty following trouble two days ago and fans of AEK Athens, at the heart of Tuesday's worst incidents, were separated from the rest of the supporters in the 10,000 strong crowd.

But shortly before the end of the third place play-off police had to move in again.

The trouble started when objects appeared to be thrown at fans of Kinder Bologna. Special wire barriers had been erected inside the Sant Jordi stadium to make the police task easier and, helmeted and with batons, they moved in to clear the troublemakers while some Italian fans sought safety on the other side of the arena.

Extra police took up positions in the stadium and the third place match was completed. (AP, Reuters)



NO SURRENDER - AEK Athens's Vranislav Pranjevic (left) goes for a layup as Kinder Bologna's Hugo Scamocchini tries to block him during the EuroLeague final last night.

Red Wings down Coyotes in playoff opener

DETROIT (AP) - Detroit opened defense of its Stanley Cup championship in high gear Wednesday night as Joe Kocur scored two goals in the 6-3 win over the Phoenix Coyotes.

Detroit, hoping to become the first National Hockey League team in six years to repeat as Cup champion, scored three times in the first 13 minutes and blew it open with three more goals in the second period.

Nicklas Lidstrom, Kocur and Sergei Fedorov scored first-period goals for the Red Wings, who ended 42 years of frustration by capturing the Cup in 1997. Darren McCarty, Kocur and Kirk Maltby scored in the second as the Red Wings chased Nikolai Khabibulin, the goalie who caused them so much anguish two years ago.

Rick Tocchet scored in the first period and Cliff Ronning and Bob Corkum scored in the third for Phoenix.

Sabres 3, Flyers 2
Donald Audette's third-period

goal, which came after visiting Buffalo squandered a two-goal lead, won it for the Sabres. Audette slugged in a rebound from the side of the net with 8:17 left to play.

Star goalie Dominik Hasek made 22 saves overall, but had one rough spot when the Flyers rallied from a 2-0 deficit to tie the game with goals 19 seconds apart earlier in the period.

Michael Grosek and Wayne Primeau also scored for Buffalo, while Rod Brind'Amour and Chris Gratton got Philadelphia's goals.

Audette got the winner after Flyers goalie Sean Burke flopped to stop a shot from the point. The rebound trickled to the side of the net, and Audette lifted the puck over the fallen goalie from a tough angle.

Capitals 3, Bruins 1
Olaf Kolzig made 27 saves, and Brian Bellows, Sergei Gonchar and Esa Tikkanen scored for host Washington.

With their leading scorer hobbled

NHL PLAYOFF GLANCE

First round

(Best-of-7)

Wednesday's results:

Washington 3, Boston 1 - Washington leads series 1-0

Detroit 6, Phoenix 3 - Detroit leads series 1-0

Columbus 2, New Jersey 1 (OT) - Columbus leads series 1-0

Buffalo 3, Philadelphia 2 - Buffalo leads series 1-0

Dallas 4, San Jose 1 - Dallas leads series 1-0

Edmonton 3, Colorado 2 - Edmonton leads series 1-0

Last night:

Montreal at Pittsburgh; Los Angeles at St. Louis

Today:

Boston at Washington; Phoenix at Detroit; Columbus at New Jersey; Philadelphia at San Jose; St. Louis at Edmonton; Colorado at Dallas

for half the game, Washington relied on their tenacious defense and goal-tender Koltzig to mark a successful return to the playoffs.

The victory ran the Capitals' home unbeaten streak to 12 games, although playoff enthusiasm has yet to capture all of Washington: there were about 8,000 empty seats in the 20,000-seat MCI Center.

Sabres 2, Devils 1 (OT)

Bruce Gardner scored on a rebound at 5:48 of overtime and visiting Ottawa stunned New Jersey.

Even though the Senators split

and Brodeur blocked his shot from the right point.

Gardner got the rebound and flipped it over a diving Brodeur, who was under tremendous pressure in the third period and overtime as referee Paul Devorak called three straight penalties against New Jersey.

Stars 4, Sharks 1

Host Dallas lost top regular-season scorer Joe Nieuwendyk to a first-period knee injury, but recovered to take the opener of the Western Conference series.

San Jose had won four straight regular-season games in Dallas before Wednesday's defeat.

Nieuwendyk got the Sharks' goal only 2:22 into the game as Dallas scored twice in the opening three minutes. But with 4:02 left in the period, Nieuwendyk was knocked out of the game by San Jose defenseman Bryan Marchment's check. Nieuwendyk's condition will be further evaluated by team medical personnel on Thursday.

John Lind made it 2-0 only 37 seconds after Nieuwendyk's goal.

Owen Nolan scored the Sharks' only goal at 12:40 of the first period.

Oilers 3, Avalanche 2

Bill Guerin, Dean McAmmond and Boris Mironov scored in a span of 3:49 late in the game, rallying Edmonton to an away victory.

The seventh-seeded Oilers overcame a 2-0 deficit in the final nine minutes of the game.

The No. 2 Avalanche, playing without captain Joe Sakic following his one-game suspension for a knee-on-knee hit on Detroit's Kris Draper last Saturday, built their lead on two goals from Peter Forsberg.

The Oilers' Curtis Joseph had 25 saves, and Patrick Roy had 31.

Guerin made it 2-1 on a power-play goal at 11:02. Barely a minute later, Jarmo Nittimäki sent the puck the length of the ice and Fred Marchant chased it into the right corner, passing to McAmmond, who beat Roy on a shot from just inside the left circle at 12:22.

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Sampras jeopardizes return to No. 1 after being humbled by Santoro

MONTE CARLO (Reuters) - Pete Sampras jeopardized his chance of becoming world No. 1 again when he crashed out of the Monte Carlo Open yesterday - 24 hours after saying he could master clay-court tennis.

The American suffered a humiliating 6-1 6-1 third-round defeat by Frenchman Fabrice Santoro and will have to wait to see how Czech Petr Korda progresses to know whether he can claim the top spot back.

Korda, who beat Spaniard Albert Costa 5-7 6-4 6-4, must at least reach the final to take the top ranking from Chile's Marcelo Rios, who is not playing here because of injury.

Australian Open champion Korda now meets former Wimbledon champion Richard Krajicek of the Netherlands in the quarter-finals.

Sampras' stunning defeat came after a first-round bye and a 6-4 7-5 second-round victory over Andre Agassi on Wednesday, his first-ever win here.

Until then, Sampras had lost the three matches he had played at Monte Carlo in recent years, but had been heartened by his first success here.

"I know deep inside that I can play on the stuff (clay)," he said after beating Agassi.

Santoro, who reached the semifinals last year and beat Thomas Muster, Sergi Bruguera and Stefan Edberg in previous years here,

won seven consecutive games in a sequence that gave him the first set and a 1-0 lead in the second.

"I played well at first but then he helped me beat him a lot," said Santoro, who is ranked 25th in the world.

Santoro, who beat the American three years ago in Rome, now faces compatriot Cedric Pioline.

While Sampras was going through a nightmare against Santoro, Korda was struggling against Costa, a losing finalist here two years ago.

Despite leading 5-0 in the first set, the Czech suddenly cracked and, like Sampras on center court, conceded seven consecutive games to lose the set.

He then picked himself up, winning the second set and fighting his way back from one break down in the third to win in just under two hours.

Earlier, French Open champion Gustavo Kuerten, seeded eighth, lost to Pioline 7-6 6-1 while

Yevgeny Kafelnikov lost to Spain's Carlos Moya 6-2 6-3.

The defeats were hardly surprising though, as neither Brazil's Kuerten nor Russian Kafelnikov ever did well here while Pioline reached the final in 1993 and Moya the semifinals last year.

Krajicek will be one of very few serve-and-volley players left in the next round as he eased past Czech clay-court specialist Bohdan Ulihrach 6-4 6-0.

Boris Becker, a Monaco resident, now semi-retired, on reached the quarter-finals of only this fourth tournament of the season when he swept past 13th seed Mark Philippoussis of Australia 6-1 6-1 in 48 minutes.

Becker, three times a losing finalist here, had not reached the last eight of a tournament since Wimbledon last year.

He now faces a daunting opponent in Spain's Alberto Berasategui, the most consistent player on clay this season.

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